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EAST AND WEST

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"The Seasons come and go, the Sun and Moon move on their way, without collision, and harmoniously. So are all-living things nourished together without injuring one another. Even as the water runs in the stream according to natural law, so come the changes that are great. But the sovereign faculty of Nature is that it sends forth living beings and inspires their growth continually. Behold, this is what makes the glory of the Earth, and of Heaven which is above the Earth."

CHINESE CLASSIC—"Chung Yung" (Eternal Righteousness), ch. xxx., 3.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

EAST AND WEST

BY

DAVID ALEC WILSON

AUTHOR OF "MR FROUDE AND CARLYLE,"
"ANECDOTES OF BIG CATS AND OTHER BEASTS,"
ETC.

98987

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

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PREFACE

THIS book is, like the same author's *Anecdotes of Big Cats and other Beasts*, a selection from notes made in the course of the last twenty-five years, while serving in the Indian Civil Service in Burma. The plan of both books is the same, namely, an endeavour to combine the method of Carlyle, "Nothing but the truth," with the method of Voltaire, "Nothing that is tedious." The only difference is that this book deals with humanity. It contains a justification from the history of India for the policy of a WHITE AUSTRALIA.

The usual aim of Europeans hitherto, in writing about Asia, has been to let people at home see through the eyes of the "men on the spot." That is a good thing; but it is not enough. It is only the first step to a sympathetic knowledge; for the "men on the spot" seldom see very much, and may not understand what they see. As the Arabian proverb runs, "The ass may go often

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to Mecca, but never knows more than an ass." Humanity is everywhere too abstruse to be deciphered at sight.

The present writer is trying to show the way to the second step; to let Europeans, both at home and in Asia, see how the world looks to the eyes of Asiatics. Even a little progress in that direction would be a general blessing; for to remove misunderstandings is the real road to abiding peace among men.

To see things as they are in this manner is not only useful in the long run, it is not a task at all, but a delightful entertainment. Any little jar to some old conceit of ours is compensated manifold by the pleasantest of pleasures, for such it is to know the truth, to become familiar with the fairy tales of science and the miracles of time.

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EAST AND WEST

I

INTRODUCTORY PERSONALITIES

ON 4th February 1886 I landed in Rangoon and reported myself to the Secretary to the Local Government for employment, as per covenant, in the Indian Civil Service. I was agreeably surprised to encounter in the then Secretary (Sir Edward Symes we call him now if ever he is mentioned, which is seldom, for indeed he is dead) one of the most transparently truthful and able men I had ever met—an impression which I found to be general among all who had business with the Government of Burma.

He invited me to stay at his house, and finding on trial an "aptitude for précis writing," he was about to take me into his own office; and therein I might have been engulfed (for he afterwards said he would have kept me there), but for the friendly candour of Mr Jameson, the Inspector-

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General of Police, who confidentially warned me against the Secretariat.

I think I was walking home with him from a club one evening ("Symes is sure to be late, you'll be in time for dinner!"), to hear the conclusion of a recent episode he had been telling, when he asked, "Where are you to be sent?"

"Secretariat."

"Don't. You'll lose your digestion in six months. It's hard for any of us to keep right here; but for a youngster not acclimatized, working with Symes now, and with no time for exercise, it's impossible. It'll spoil you for life very soon."

Standing on the roadside near his gate, if I remember rightly, he told me in detail of two painful instances in recent years, adding, "Ask any doctor—ask Symes himself."

"I never knew what a stomach was, and Symes does not seem dyspeptic."

"He'll break down worse if he continues. The excitement of the war is carrying him on. Tell him so, if you like. His friends want him to know it. He's doing half-a-dozen men's work."

I told Symes this within an hour of hearing it.

He did not suspect whom I was quoting, and was too honourable a man to try to discover; but he admitted enough to show that Jameson

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was right, and that other friends too had similarly admonished him.

I recollect one hilarious morning when I was going out before 6 A.M. for an early walk, and seeing him already busy at his desk, shook my fist at him, in pantomimic reference to the last night's talk. He answered, by gestures more than words, that he was better there than restlessly struggling for sleep that would not come; and when invited to "go out, rather," responded by an invitation to me to join in desk work at that early hour, to which I piously replied, "Get thee behind me, Satan," and so went out.

In short, I begged him to find work for me outside the Secretariat—at least until I was acclimatized. "It's the chance of a lifetime." "I do not care." There was a good deal of talk, backward and forward, of a quasi-confidential kind. I did not shirk work. As a disciple of Carlyle I was bent upon it, and impatient of amusement; but as a student of Carlyle's life, and acquainted with sundry Anglo-Indians, I had a horror of dyspepsia, and knew the danger of it in the East. Besides, I was full of curiosity, and knew that there was nothing I did not already know to be learned by clerical work in the offices. Symes was sharp enough to discover

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what none of his successors suspected, or would have been able to realize and believe if told, that I had no ambition. Beyond a livelihood, the Government of India had nothing to give which I wanted.

It was not that I laughed at its honours, as Kipling has suggested that men do. Mackay's *Twenty-one Days in India* seems to me to hit the nail on the head, and to show with wit and accuracy the normal Englishman's point of view. In real life, so far as my own observation goes, the men who laugh loudly at such Byzantine puerilities are generally men who wanted more than they could get of them. The man of sense is merely bored, and if he accepts a title to please his wife he does it in the same spirit as he waits upon her, if ever he is so unlucky as to have to wait upon her, at a milliner's. Few people are really ashamed of decorations if they have them; and none is ever proud of them unless he has nothing else to excuse his pride. All the same, even when John Bull does not hide his ribbon, as he would if really ashamed, it is amusing to watch the bad grace with which he wears it. It is only the low-minded kind of man, mentally and morally little developed, who rejoices unfeignedly and is glad to be adorned by "titles" and

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"orders" of the golden sheep or of any other kind.

What a man covets, next after a fit female partner, is money or power; and, like many another of the right sort, I cared little more for these things than for frippery. I once had the honour to answer our highest of Eastern officials as Diogenes answered Alexander the Great, that I wanted nothing; and he seemed so little surprised that I thought it possible that he might have received such an answer before. But nobody talks of such sentiments without necessity; and Symes seemed to me to show unusual penetration in detecting such a temper, veiled as it was by shyness and reserve.

What I had no hesitation about divulging then or at any other time was the estimate of official publications which I had learned "from men who were older than I, from many far wiser than I." When Symes became dissuasive on that topic he was met by chaff.

Napoleon at St. Helena once explained, if he has been truly reported, that the English Government had no choice but to issue Blue books that were false, because it had to enter into explanations with the populace about what the populace could not understand. Therefore it was compelled to sup-

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press facts and mislead the readers. This seemed a great defect of Democracy to the considerate Napoleon. He did not, apparently, think of how officials could lie more freely when they had only a few men atop to deceive. He must even have forgotten his own performances, for "false as a bulletin" was a proverb in Paris in his time. London has never been quite so bad as that; but of course the differences between one country and another in this respect are trifling. Even Moltke falsified his history, and his nephew boasted of his doing so, because it was to screen the faults of others; and the learned Mr Legge, in his edition of the Chinese Classics (vol. v., Prolegomena, pp. 38 to 53), explains that their holy history, the "Springs and Autumns" or "Annals," esteemed a classic to this day by critics who suppose that Confucius edited it, is full of mis-statements and suppressions intended to mislead. The Bible has been falsified in the same way by the Scribes and Pharisees whom Jesus cursed.

"As it was in the beginning,
Is to-day official sinning,
And shall be, for evermore."

Books blue and red, yellow and white, black and brown, green and gold and the rest, official

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publications are of many colours, but they are all shady, and never to be believed without corroboration. It is easy to see some of the reasons why. These books are generally the public allegations of governing men about themselves, and so they are inevitably partial, and often a kind of reply to critics. Besides, it is only a simpleton who expects that men will tell their own faults if they can avoid it; and it is unfair to impute mendacity when men are reporting their own doings and do so wrongly, because men cannot see themselves as others see them, and are specially liable then to make mistakes. At the same time it is as ridiculous to believe men reporting their own performances as to blame them for making wrong reports.

These explanations are guesses, matters of opinion. What is certain is this. The pretentious conglomerations of printed or otherwise published matter, put out by men dressed in a little brief authority, from the primeval Pharaohs to the last-elected President of the last-made Republic, are at the best unreadable fiction, as untrustworthy as any advertisement of goods for sale, and at the worst inexpressibly revolting, savouring of swindling and breach of trust, more nauseous, if possible, than any unscrupulous newspaper.

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Something to this effect Symes was much amused to elicit.

"You do not mean they are worse than this sort of thing," said he once, pointing to a pile of newspapers.

"Oh, certainly not," I answered, hastily adding, "at least I hope not," to his obvious amusement, on reflecting that I had not yet looked at any of the Blue books of Burma.

Of the rest of our talks in February 1886 I can only recall with confidence the conclusion, which I was not allowed to forget. It was of course the war time.

"You want to study Asiatics by working in direct contact with them. That you can easily get; you'll have work enough to study by. But I perceive what you're wanting is a share of the fighting. That also may come. You'll go to Pegu as Township Judge and Treasury Officer, and if you give every spare minute to talking Burmese you'll get a rowdy Subdivision in six months' time. You'll be of no use in that kind of place till you talk Burmese well."

I pleaded for less time, as I had learned to read and write Burmese in London, but all I got was a promise:

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"If an Assistant Commissioner is shot anywhere you can take his place."

So I went to Pegu, and there in June received a telegram from Symes: "Parsons is shot in Allanmyo. You go to that Subdivision as Assistant Commissioner. When can you start?" To which I replied, "Next train."

By the nineties Burma was at peace; and from early in 1898 I have been employed exclusively in legal work, judicial. Indeed, I had been preparing for the legal profession in 1883, when I accidentally heard of the Indian Civil Service examination, and tried it after only six weeks' coaching. I passed; and duly felt, as anybody would, the attractions of going straight upon the Bench instead of practising at the Bar. But I had misgivings; and completed my legal training, doing the probationary work of the Civil Service Commissioners in two hours a day. When I left London I had not only passed all the professional examinations, but had arranged with a friendly Bencher to be called to the Bar in my absence, if I found the service of the British Government in Burma incompatible with common honesty and decided to fall back on my profession.

It has not been necessary. Both on the executive and on the judicial side I have found

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it possible to abstain altogether from lies, public and private, and yet remain in active service till, in the fullness of time, I go on leave this year to return no more. Of course I have at times had to suffer for candour; but it was martyrdom on the cheap, nothing to speak about, a great deal less than I expected, or would have had to suffer elsewhere.

I do not repent coming East, but I should not do it again, and would not advise any Englishman to do it. Partly, the conditions have altered; but the great objection to India and Burma is the climate, which will never alter. To be weak is the real misery, doing or suffering. Sickness and debility are worse than death; and except on the hills there is little enjoyment of life for any European in India. Barely, and then by lavish expenditure, can it be made endurable. The whole hot peninsula is to us like a Purgatory turned upside down; for the first year is the pleasantest, and each succeeding cycle of seasons generally is harder to bear than any that went before. The Mediterranean man is happier than those whose limbs are bred in England. That is to say, he degenerates more slowly. We get up in the mornings already tired.

A bright American lady said to me lately,

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apropos of her own observations in globe-trotting, not of anything I had said, "I wonder how long the people of England will let the Indian Empire go on when they realize what a blood-tax it is?" That is a question for Indians as well as Englishmen to ponder.

"God's will be done," said a missionary once, in expressing similar sentiments. To which it may be added: "Assuredly it shall be done, whether you like it or not. The question of questions is—What is the will of God, or Nature? What is the best thing to do so as to be in harmony with it?"

Like many of those who have studied the problem long, I have no formula ready-made for a reply. In most of what our scribes have written hitherto I can discern "no light, but only darkness visible." It seems to me that we have not knowledge enough to be able to guess, much less to determine, like an hysterical woman, in a doctrinaire way beforehand, what the future is to be. In old Quaker phraseology, we must "wait upon the Lord"; that is to say, watch events and grope our way.

These authentic documents are now published in the hope of helping a little, were it only by encouraging others to speak out, to provide

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materials for opinions of a practical kind, so that the inevitable groping may be done with as little stumbling as possible. To use the sensible words Lord Elgin spoke when he was going away: "Success and failure are words that one should leave to others. All that a man can make sure of is that he has not consciously done less than his best."

One thing must be added in conclusion, in fairness to the peoples of the Far East. Politeness or courtesy cannot be defined, but it may be described as complete consideration for others in the details of human conduct. In short, it is a form of that reciprocity which Confucius taught the Chinese to consider the essence of righteousness.

I had spent a few days in Egypt in 1886, waiting for a steamer; and there, and in Burma within a month of landing, I could see that this sweetening of life was one lesson, perhaps the chief one, which the West had to learn from the East. Only a few of the most superior men I had known at home were equal to such politeness as the common people practised here.

I have done my best to reciprocate. Good health made it easy. Much European ill-behaviour is due to disease. I have always been a very

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busy man, with many irons in the fire, and intolerant of dreaming and impatient of loss of time. That has hampered me in the important matter of politeness. But avoidance of falsehood was never a hindrance. Mendacity is a vulgar imitation of courtesy—not the real thing, but a sham. What mitigates my own remorse for occasional failure to do as I was trying is the knowledge that I never intended offence and did my best to make amends when I found I had given it inadvertently. But even the average native does better than I could, at least in early years; for not once as yet, in all my time in the East, and this is January 1911, not once have I received rudeness in word or action, inadvertent or intentional, from any man, woman or child, Indian, Burmese, or Chinese.

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II

THE ARYANS OLD AND NEW

BEING GLIMPSES OF THE ARYANS OF THE VEDAS SEEN BY THE LIGHT OF TO-DAY

1. THE GAYATRĪ

"THE earth stretches far to the east," and the sun rises there. I can hardly look upon him arising, "Rejoicing like a strong man to run his course," without recalling that beautiful old text which the Brahmins are still muttering in their morning prayers :—

> "O Earth and Sky, one wondrous whole,
> And Light, that brings to life the soul!
> Behold the Light,—'tis Savitrī![1]
> The light that all men long to see :
> And while we look, may he impart
> His fire divine to mind and heart!"

This is a translation of the Gayatrī, the most famous text in the Vedas. The Hindus say that it is the key to all their religion and philosophy. It is repeated many times daily by

[1] ī=ee.

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thousands of men, and it has been so repeated for thousands of years.

Savitrī was a kind of Phœbus-Apollo, the Sun-God as a stimulator or vivifier; but we cannot understand the point of view of the ancient poet unless we remember that to him Savitrī was the living Light in every sense of these words, only not at all a human shape, however the limitations of language might compel him to speak. Read the sublime opening of the third book of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and know that the maker of the Gayatrī was no more an idolater than John Milton, and then you may begin to understand it.

The "maker of the Gayatrī" is all we can say of him. A prehistoric Goethe he must have been, an inspired man of genius, enlightening men. "Inglorious" we may call him now, as we know not his name or date, but we cannot call him "mute." The harmony of his thought can even be heard through the obstructions of translation into a business language like ours, conveyed to us on the lips of the Hindus, as if by a magic gramophone, like muffled music from far beyond the grave.

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2. THE ARYANS

A FEW thousand years ago, quite recently in the history of this old world of ours, what we now call India was different from the India of to-day. The hills and valleys, and the plains that now seem boundless as the ocean, were covered with forests, which probably made the rainfall heavier and the climate more equable. But you could not see the country for the trees.

Where people now swarm like ants there were none to be seen. There were few of them, and they hid themselves like the other wild animals. They were probably, most of them, like the few savages, still lurking in back corners; living in groups no bigger than the families of lions can be; dwelling in the trees like orang-outangs; hunting; eating wild fruits and vegetables, honey, eggs and creeping things to eke out their game; glad to get carrion; omnivorous, in short, and yet often hungry. The men had no clothes, and the women no leaf aprons. The handiest big leaf was enough for them; and even that probably came into fashion only when they expected strangers.

For strangers were fated to come. India was not to remain for ever a hunting ground. How many thousand years it had been so, none can

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tell; but the time came at last for a change. As water covers the lower levels of the earth, so, but more slowly, do men spread over the upper; and no people is allowed to keep its country to itself unless and until it can defy the world in arms. A few wandering savages can fight the other wild beasts; but what could all the wild huntsmen in India do against a single tribe of men who had learned to work and fight *together?*

It is said by some that the word Aryans meant kinsmen, men who had learned to stand by their kin. Another derivation is from the plough; and at a later date the word seems to have meant noblemen.

Whatever the derivation of their name, the Aryans were white men who had cattle and tools, cultivated the ground and lived in villages. They were united in tribes; and through the mountain passes, from the pastoral uplands of Central Asia, tribe after tribe of them came down. Like the Puritans settling on the fringe of America, they began to clear away the trees and till the ground in the north-western corner of India. It was the first they reached; and in the course of centuries they moved and settled farther and farther east and south, like glaciers moving from the mountains, by instinct, inevitably, without asking themselves why.

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Of course the swarthy and starving aristocrats of the forests objected. They needed all the land themselves. A square mile a man is a small allowance for hunters. They fought the pioneers as the Red Indians fought the Puritans, and succeeded well in sudden surprises, or in shooting from behind a bush. But that is not the kind of fighting that either makes conquests or hinders them. These "Dasyus," enemies or dusky devils, were swept ever farther and farther east and south.

Thus the northern and western fringes of India, including most of what we call the Punjab, became an Aryan land; and we can see what the settlers were like from their Rig-Veda, or book of knowledge or wisdom in verse. It is an old collection of about a thousand prayers, hymns or songs, averaging about ten little verses each, and divided into ten books. It is a primitive anthology, "Flower-garden" or "Treasury" of verse. The Rig-Veda is the oldest thing of that kind extant in the world. The value of it cannot be measured in any metal. Like the Chinese Classics, it is alive to-day, being still committed to memory, in spite of discouragements, and esteemed a source of inspired wisdom.

1000 B.C. is the latest date that can be suggested for it. Professor Jacobi of Bonn argues

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for 4000 B.C. Many of the pieces must have been ancient when collected. So, even supposing the correct date to be the most recent possible, the Rig-Veda is a book of Hindu "Hymns ancient and modern," whereof the most modern is not later than 1000 B.C.

It is monotonous to read and soon becomes tedious. Allusions to this god or that, or to the unknown God, in sublimity recalling the farthest flights of the sweet singers of Israel, of Sophocles or Lucretius, of Cleanthes or Milton, appear amid many vain repetitions. We have to remember that we are reading scholastic English in most of our translations. Put the finest poetry in the world into such language, and Goethe himself, who thought translation the test of poetry, would be at a loss to find it there. We have to remember also that the Aryans heard the songs one at a time. To "get inside their skins," as General Gordon expressed it, we have to try to read their hymns or songs as they sung them, dwelling on any favourite verse or ditty as they must have done. Then indeed the Rig-Veda may become like a magic mirror or cinematograph, giving us glimpses of the Aryan pioneers of prehistoric times as they lived in the Punjab and the adjacent hills and valleys, doing their work

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without slaves as yet; fighting, drinking and felling trees; hammering, ploughing, singing, praying, gambling, repenting; running after the girls, or gathered round the graves.

Thus they lived in a white India for uncounted centuries, while the native gentry were naked savages, that might gather to plunder, but melted away at the prospect of a fight, like quicksilver through the fingers. But by-and-by the Aryans, pressing ever farther and farther away from the uplands and cool breezes, like glaciers now melted and swiftly seeking the sea, came towards Bengal and Southern India; and on the way they met Mongolian tribes and masses of blacks, that boasted themselves to be "of fearful swiftness, unyielding in battle, and in colour like a dark blue cloud." Mongols or Dravidians, or whoever else that bore the dusky livery of the sun, they were able to extort fair treatment, and obtained quarter when they had to yield by being willing to work; and so it came to pass in the long lapse of ages that great Aryan kingdoms arose, and the Aryans ceased to exist as a people. They had never been a nation.

It was as if the settlement of North America had occupied six thousand years instead of a century or two; and in a few States, the first to

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be settled, the whites had remained a pure race and worked for themselves; but had elsewhere lived as parasites on the labour of tamed and enslaved Red Indians and negroes, exploiting their superstitions as the Brahmins did, multiplying mongrels and gods, and for the rest, doing little but fighting and "superintending" the favourite occupations of mankind.

What North America might then have become, as the peoples white and red and black were mixed, and the antipathies arising out of colour were fixed and congealed, such in fact is India. Men of different colours detest each other, for "each," as the negroes tell us, "likes his own smell best"; and the natural hatreds, which might easily abate, are made far worse by mixture, especially when vanity begins on any side. Then the proverb of the French artists receives a new and strange illustration: "It is not the colours that quarrel, but the hues and tints and shades." That is why the Indians are divided into castes, whereof there are now more than 1900 among Hindus alone. Equality is part of the Mohammedan religion, as may be seen in Egypt: but in India the very Mohammedans are divided. In one little town there were lately found to be about nine sets of them, not one of which would

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intermarry or associate freely with any of the others.

We talk of Austria-Hungary as a heterogeneous empire; yet Germans, Slavs and Hungarians are all white men, and in the whole empire, count as you will, you cannot count as many as twenty different sets of humanity, so to speak, to avoid ambiguous words—groups of human beings closely knit together, keeping outsiders at arm's length and intermarrying among themselves exclusively. Hardly a race in Europe is so self-contained as every caste in India, and there, count as you will, you cannot count less than 2000 castes. The Hindus alone are about that number; and the many millions of Mohammedans, to say nothing of the few Parsees, Jews and Christians, are all divided into white and black and intermediate blends. The consequence is that solidarity is unknown in any Indian town, almost in any village.

"You must get rid of your castes," a Japanese statesman is reported to have recently replied to Indians waiting upon him and asking in effect, "What must we do to be saved?" "Get rid of your castes," said he; and they must have felt it would have seemed as easy if he had told them to get rid of the sun.

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The matter is indeed more intricate than he supposed. There is good in the castes as well as bad. The Indian problem is to keep the good in their system, the fine family solidarity, the honourable respect for lineage, and the mutual respect which makes men keep at a distance from each other when antipathetic. This last quality is the great justification of caste—it minimizes quarrels. It makes the nigger-lynching horrors of America quite needless in the East.

These and other blessings of the caste system are too good to lose; but sooner or later a way must be found to escape from its terrible evils. In this the peoples of India must minister to themselves, for the other peoples cannot understand their difficulties. Once they realize, as they are beginning to do here and there, the need for changing, they will begin to seek and find a way to change.

The "conservatism of Asiatics" is a misleading phrase. No people, and hardly any individual, can be changed from the outside. They therefore must be "conservative" when others drive them. However willing to oblige us, they cannot but remain themselves; and when they follow our example in any matter against their own convictions they lose their self-respect. But they too

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are men and women like ourselves, they too are moving on. In East and West alike change never stops. From century to century, from place to place, it is only the speed that varies. There is no finality anywhere. You cannot cast the anchor in the stream of life or make the tides be still.

So India too shall change; but the records of human experience seem too restricted to furnish any similar case, and we must wait and watch developments. The most we can well say is that if any change is to be for the better it must grow out of the past, like the growth of moss, or the slow generations of men.

Meanwhile there is one of the multitudinous mischiefs done by caste which specially needs to be told, because it is the worst and is generally overlooked. To the Greeks of Alexander the Great, the Indians of the Punjab seemed wonderful for many things, and in particular because "no Indian was ever known to lie," as the historian wrote.[1] A similar report is made of the ancient Persians, who were Aryans too, akin to the Punjabis. When travellers exaggerate now, it is in the opposite direction, saying the Indians are "liars all." The mixing of races and result-

[1] Arrian's *Indica*, xii

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ing division into castes is the cause of whatever change there is.

It is needful to remember the past in order to understand the present. The Greeks were shrewd and had no prejudices in favour of other people. They would not have written as they did if the veracity of the ancient Persians and Punjabi Indians had not been above that found in Europe. If their testimony had been better known we might have been spared the speech that made a Viceroy famous: "Undoubtedly, truth took a high place in the moral codes of the West before it had been similarly honoured in the East, where craftiness and diplomatic wile have always been held in much repute."

"Undoubtedly" this statement was historically wrong. The mistake was natural, as most mistakes are. The speaker believed the travellers' tales, and did not realize that humanity is harder to decipher than any hieroglyphics. A globe-trotter at large among strange peoples and explaining them is like a child turning the pages of a Greek or Hebrew book and affecting to read aloud.

The problem remains—Why do the modern travellers tell tales so different from the ancient Greeks?

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They are partly mistaken, of course, and exaggerate unconsciously. It is one of Spinoza's plainest propositions:—"The proud man delights in the company of flatterers and parasites, but hates the company of the high-minded" (*Ethics*, iv. 57). A suspicion of such feelings is the reason why the best of the Indians are practically unknown to us, and do not wish to become known, whereas the Greeks were able to associate with their leading men, the warriors and sages, "gymnosophists" and others. Not only are those we meet below the average, but they generally use what is to them a foreign language; and men are always prone to speak falsely when using any other than their mother tongue.

Perhaps the pros and cons of this difficult matter have nowhere been better stated than in the "*Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*," by Major-General Sleeman, (ii. pp. 16-47). Though published before the Mutiny, it is good evidence of to-day's reality. He quotes (ii. p. 26) a native law officer as saying to him what might have been said yesterday: "Three-fourths of those who do not scruple to lie in our courts would be ashamed to lie before their neighbours or the elders of their village." The

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same thing has been said to me repeatedly in Burma by men I could believe.

When every such allowance has been made, the fact remains that the Indians at present have generally fallen below the average European level of truthfulness and trustworthiness; and this sad fall of theirs is the worst of the evils that can be traced to caste.

Daudet would have said it was "the sun"; but that hypothesis will not work. The Punjab was as sunny in the days of the ancient Greeks as it is now. The theories that impute mendacity to race are equally untenable. General Sleeman and many others have experienced the veracity of the Gonds and other humble tribes who had not "learned the value of a lie." The Burmans, brown Mongolians, living in the Tropics, but without caste and by themselves till lately, are as truthful as northern Europeans; and even where corrupted by foreign contact they are yet as good as the average anywhere. So are Chinamen at home. The men who know them best esteem them most; and China's crowded millions have more of the sun than the people of Tarascon.

So far, therefore, as Indian lying is a peculiarity distinguishing them from other peoples it is surely reasonable to find the cause of it in social

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arrangements which are also peculiar, and which directly encourage falsehood. To be one of a caste and live amid many hostile castes makes a man lie continually; for never to tell the truth to an enemy is one of the primary instincts of humanity, and living among other castes, as Indians have to do, is living among the enemy; and so lying grows almost as common as breathing, when talking to a stranger.

The novelty of this explanation of Indian mendacity might beget a becoming diffidence in putting it forward, if it were not confirmed by the fact that, wherever conditions like caste are found, the same tendency can be seen. To say nothing of London or Paris, look only at New York. The various racial groups, in what may be called the cosmopolitan quarters, may be truthful among themselves; but to outsiders they lie like the worst of the Hindus. The special misfortune of India is that this affliction is more widely spread.

Thus was the better part of their inheritance lost to the descendants of the Aryans; and to them the loss was as sore as it could have been to any. One of their hymns to "Vak," that is "Speech" or "The Word," calls it the bringer of "the truth dear to men," the revelation of all

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that is best and highest. "He wanders about in vain delusion, who knows not the flower and the fruit of Speech."

No benefit or injury men can do to each other can for a moment be weighed in the balance with the right or the wrong use of words. The civilized savagery in which lying is a matter of course is nearly as horrible as that of cannibal tribes. There has been no affliction in the long-drawn agony of India's woe that ever equalled this. Perhaps that was why they clung so desperately to their Rig-Veda, as to utterances of a sincerity no longer attainable, and a souvenir to keep alive the hope of a return of truth. Meanwhile the sorrows of false babblement appear to have been an inevitable result, whether permanent or not, of the mixing of the races and the separation into so many castes.

It would be unjust to blame the ancient pioneers. Let us remember their difficulties, abstain from judging them, and try only to see them. We are not seeking materials for opinions, but a glimpse, if we can get it, of a vanished world; and for that purpose, driven by fate and curiosity, we are like Æneas in Virgil's story—we are going down among the dead.

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3. FIGHTING

THE troubles of the great primeval forests, swamps, rivers and mountains might be considered equal in America and India; but in India, compared with the United States, there was in addition the sweltering tropical sun, which even in the forests makes man feel his weakness as nothing else can, laying a hand as of red-hot iron upon him and choking him, and if defied, as the white man from a cooler climate is apt to defy it, then changing his countenance and sending him away. Besides, they were few at first, these pioneers of long ago; and every fresh tribe that came had to grope its way after those that preceded, so that they were hampered by manifold collisions among themselves.

They were situated like the Puritan settlers, but they had no howitzers wherewith to preach the gospel of peace "with irresistible logic." They had to come to close grips with their Red Indians. Sun, swamp and poisoned arrows laid them low; but always the successors or survivors struggled on, refusing to be beaten, preferring to die. "Steady, boys, steady!" It was as in Goethe's poem:

> "The first did fall, the second stood,
> The third hewed in with falchion good;

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And still the next had prowess more,
Forgot the thousands slain before."

When all the conditions of the settlement of India are considered it is no wonder that the progress of the Aryans was so slow. It is no wonder that it may have been about thirty times slower than in America. The miracle is that they succeeded at all. What a wonderful history has been left untold!

They were clearly of our own kin and like ourselves, these Aryan settlers, and in nothing more so than in their disregard of history. The Chinese say that that is a characteristic mark of half-civilized races. At any rate, there is no history in the Hindu literature. Even in later days, when writing was easy and MSS. abounded, the Indian man of letters who wished to live without other work had to choose between the "Church" —"so useful for keeping the niggers in order"— and the precarious life of a vagabond singer or fictioneer, telling stories or making pretty plays.

Among the early Aryans, whose literature was limited to what the memory could carry, a popular poet might become an accepted prophet or priest; but the details of mere human history did not seem worth remembering. Thus no Herodotus or Thucydides was wanted, and none

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ever arose among them to enrich mankind with a "possession for ever," a narrative both readable and true. They had not even annalists, these old Hindus: and now, when they have passed away like last year's clouds, their own descendants know them not; and after ever so much groping among the surviving heaps of literary rubbish, we can scarcely guess more than that they existed. Not one heroic man emerges visible; but only vague, fantastic figures, like the shadows of men seen through a mist, with signs of humanity enough to show that there once were men to cast such shadows, but nothing credible, not even a name.

"Literary rubbish," we may say, for to us it is rubbish; yet when it was fresh, it was as interesting as the Pickwick Papers when they first came out. It has only gradually grown old and insignificant; and even now, when it has become like the cast-off clothes of generations dead and forgotten thousands of years ago, that apparent rubbish, whenever we happen to understand a little of it, or find therein a gem of the immortal kind, can thrill us like "the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still."

One thing plain from their songs and stories is that the fighting the Aryans had to do was the

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pleasantest part of their lives. Like Moltke, they were unable to imagine a time when mankind would dispense with battle, or even wish to do it. Universal peace was a dream that never troubled them. It would have been a nightmare if it had.

They had learned to live together in tribes; but the tribes had not learned to live peaceably together as a nation, without plundering or jostling each other. It may be the mission of the English to teach them that, and go. It is only by trying to do more that we can endanger our success in doing so much. Millenniums of havoc, pointing to a fate for India like the desolation that has fallen upon Chaldea, had disposed all but a few Mahratta brigands to be ready for peace when we arrived. The gallant Sikhs themselves, soldiers as steady as the world can show, had been driven by persecution to take up weapons in the spirit of our volunteers, "for defence and not defiance." They and the like of them have strengthened our hands as peacemakers, and the best friends of India can only hope that, in the fullness of time, they may take over from us the business of keeping order.

At the quickest, however, what we have undertaken is not a temporary job, as Europeans think

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of these things. It may take many generations before the lesson is quite learned and the United States of India dispense with Anglo-Indians, except, perhaps, as a kind of souvenir, a titular Governor-General or Chief Consul of some sort. The best issue possible to the British Indian Empire would be to vanish imperceptibly, like the Cheshire cat, which left behind it nothing but the memory of an impartial grin.

If only the Indians realized how completely free of any wish to live on them as parasites their European fellow-subjects are, they in their turn would die for their share in the empire, and squelch the would-be rebels like mad dogs. But for the reciprocal ignorance of East and West, the present troubles that loom so big would fade like morning mists. In spite of castes there is not a village in India that could not govern itself better than any village in England. It is only in the administering of towns and larger areas that they have anything to learn from us. Perhaps the wisest utterance in recent years upon this topic was an article on the "Nature of the Hindus" in the *Times of India Weekly* of October 23, 1907, by Jayendrarao Bhagvanlal Durkal.

The first thing to admire in it is the fine Oriental politeness of his remark that the personal

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influence of the wrongly-educated classes is the cause of the present discontent. Mr O'Donnell has a different story to tell, and blames Lord Curzon; but, with all his faults, our late unhappy Viceroy was more the occasion than the cause of the quarrel. In many parts of India the villagers show a wish to be nasty to the English, which was never seen till lately. It is this substratum of repugnance which the judicious and wise Hindu can best explain.

Let us listen to him a little. To understand is to forgive. Never any people suffered more than his from war; and the man's sincerity seems beyond question, and his love of peace.

The Hindu or Arya, he declares, "is much in advance of the so-called civilized world," having largely left off flesh diet and the pleasures of the bowl, curbed lower weaknesses, made "godliness, self-discipline and purity the standard of the social scale," and organized life and society.

The writer evidently believes in an old Indian saying, which he is too polite to quote:

"The five great evils, *never* beneficials,
Are Famine, Plague and War, Thieves and—Officials."

What he does insist upon is that the true Hindus desire the British Government to do nothing but protect life and property, keep down

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taxation, and let Hindu boys be educated upon the Rig-Veda. They do not object to science at all, as is abundantly shown in many ways. Their scientific record is good. But to the Rig-Veda they cling, as Oliver Cromwell and his Puritans clung to the Bible. Why not?

"May all men be happy" is the traditional blessing of the Brahmins, he says. The Hindus believe in "fraternity as against equality; good and religious government as against liberty; contentment against desires; simplicity against luxury; virtue against power; universal brotherhood as against national unity; a rational faith against scepticism; and the worship of God against the worship of Mammon."

This might have been a quotation from an encyclical of the Pope or of the latest convocation of judicious bishops. It gives point to the plain speaking of Jayendrarao Bhagvanlal Durkal when he touches on religion. He declares the difference between the East and the West to be that the West has eschewed religion and the East clung to it. "The true Hindu and the true Christian are alike in the essentials of conduct, love of God and man, resignation and self-restraint." His courtesy prevents him describing the actual Christians of daily life. With admirable

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reserve he merely indicates Europe and the Europeans as the untilled field awaiting missionary effort.

There is little doubt that he is right. There is nothing we can teach these people except a little surgery and smithwork. We have been able to keep the peace temporarily, and have no doubt been helped by the simple barbarian virtues which a Chinese author noted in our forefathers a century ago; but for any European Christian missionary to set himself up as a teacher of religion to a Brahmin pundit, or a learned mullah, or a real Buddhist priest, is as funny as it would be for a nigger, who had just learned to read and write, to come to England to "teach" the dons of Oxford. Our proselytism may be harmless to a few poor outcasts or pariahs, more insignificant there than the gipsies are in England. To all the rest of Asia it is sheer bad manners, tolerable only because it is contemptible.

Another thing that irritates them is our particular variety of snobbery. Except among the royalties and German nobility the aristocracy of race is extinct in the West; but in India caste, which is race, is what matters most. The lowest sweeper considers the family record of an aspirant

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to the hand of his daughter with an eye to blood more jealous than that of any Duke in England. Jayendrarao Bhagvanlal Durkal is too thorough a Hindu to have any misgivings on this topic. He roundly appeals to modern science to vindicate his countrymen, declaring that their insistence on purity of descent is justified by the laws of heredity.

In this respect, however, we have the Farthest East on our side. The Chinese and the Japanese are as homogeneous as any people in Europe. The Japanese statesman, already quoted, advised the Indians to get rid of caste. But the yellow races concur with the Indians in honouring brains before everything, and giving the first place to the scholar whose life is worthy of his calling. They put the trader last, below the ploughman. Why? Because he is prone to lie. It is true that in China a long series of honest merchants have lifted trade to a level with other means of livelihood, but the richest merchant shows deference to the scholar. Among the Mohammedans trade is respected because Mohammed was a trader, but then he traded, as Paul made nets, for a living, not for fortune. The Mohammedan religion enjoins a degree of liberality such as only a Carnegie would approve among us. It is

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anti-sacerdotal. If Mohammed made no money by religion, why should the mullahs? It may be called old Calvinism minus the holy family dogmas. It may be described as a kind of popular Asiatic-Quakerism that approves of bloodshed, for it makes its votaries believe themselves the equals of any. Has not each to win his own salvation? And, compared to a good Mohammedan in Paradise, what is an emperor?

Thus it is that Hindu and Mohammedan, Mongolian and Indian, agree to resent our snobbery. The English notion that only the children of the rich should have an opportunity of the highest education is revolting to the soul of Asia. This is the key to the scornful hostility to all the English attempts to set up Oxfords and Cambridges in India. That is why they feel contempt for what they deem a preposterous attempt to set up for the worship of the East the idol adored in the West, the money-god—that strange new trinity, one god in three metals, gold, silver and copper, "and these three are one," with miraculous manifestations in paper—a wonderful god, as completely artificial as any mumbo-jumbo in Africa.

A Chinaman or Indian might flatter a millionaire. The Indians, in particular, are adepts at

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flattery, and when rich themselves they love it in abundant measure, heaped up and running over. But not the simplest coolie in Asia could honour a rich man as heartily as the average Londoner does, and many an honest bourgeois. That is why the Asiatics feel that we are dragging them down to a lower moral level. The proud Pathan or Brahmin watches the Englishman's politeness to some low-caste landlord or Shylock, and growls in wrath, "like to like." The complacent Chinaman sees it with a smile. What all fail to fathom is our ignorance; but "evil is wrought by want of thought, as well as want of heart."

Thus it is that the peace of Asia is in danger, and in our simplicity we are playing a comedy which might turn to tragedy—the saddest of tragedies, like that of Othello—a tragedy by mistake. For in real truth there never has been in India's history, since the far-off time when the first Aryan tribes came through the Himalayan valleys, so fair an opportunity as now for its mingled peoples to come to an understanding among themselves.

They have no time to lose. There is now a temporary truce of God, a lull in their long-continued cyclones, a pause which endures while

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John Bull is willing to remain. He is a mere globe-trotter in the Tropics. He cannot stay; and when he goes, he will never return. Even if he lingered a century or two longer, the Indians might find the time too short.

A few thousand years ago, when the centre of civilization was in Babylon, and the Aryans were doing pioneer work in India, the pioneer tribes seem to have been mostly of one race, language and religion, so that to them a national life might have seemed easily possible; but they did not *find it so.* We must not belittle them on that account. Think of the history of Germany for the last two thousand years, and be it noted that the Germans, as described by Tacitus, were very like the Aryans, only a little more savage and lazy, and living in more dismal surroundings. Or think of the jovial Irish, who wish to be a nation, and what a fine happy nation they were, like brethren, dwelling together in unison; or think of the Scottish clans, or the States of Italy, or the anarchic Poles; and let no European cast a stone at the discordant Hindus. Tribe stood independent of tribe, each in its own set of villages. A dispute about land or cattle between two tribes was as hard to settle as one between two great powers in Europe.

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The women were independent, but domesticated. Some of the Rig-Veda hymns, it is said, were made by them, yet there are few references to the sex in the whole collection. Here is one that dwells in the memory (v. 61):

"A woman who finds out the weak, the thirsty, the needy, and is mindful of the gods, is worth as much as a man."

There is no sneer latent here, as might be suspected in a modern writer. It is mere rustic simplicity and masculine conceit, and it would be taken as praise to this day. The women do indeed seem to have deserved the blessings of peacemakers. There were no Hindu Helens firing Hindu Troys. They caused no tribal wars; but within each tribe, alas! the very attractions of women so perfect made trouble at times. "Men are such fools!"

Though daughters were not welcomed as much as sons, they were attractive at maturity to other people's sons. The custom then was for a young man to make his choice and apply to the father, just as in modern Europe. The only difference was that the would-be bridegroom used to send a friend to interview the father. The habit of carrying and using weapons maybe made this prudent; and it may have been a transition step to the

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manners of civilized nations in modern Asia, where love-making is relegated to the follies of adolescence and marriages are arranged by parents. But we more primitive Europeans can sympathize yet with the wild follies of the Aryan pioneers. They used sometimes to fight for their wives, which must have furnished the most intoxicating kind of tournament ever invented.

Truly, when one considers how they had to walk through life continually ready for fighting, the marvel is that they did not exterminate each other long ago. No wonder they felt that "to die in strife is the law of life, that is certain, once for all." In the dearth of knowledge and the lack of other sports they had little else to excite them, and like the Greeks and Trojans they fought at delightfully close quarters — a pleasant kind of killing, so that it is mere stupidity not to sympathize with their bloody amusements. As one of themselves expressed it in the "Mahabharata":

> "E'en to Indra, mighty Lord,
> Homage we can scarce afford,
> Shall we yield it to the crew
> Of Pandavas faint and few? . . .
> *On the bed of arrows lying*
> *They don't sting, it's only dying!*"

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4. WORKING AND TAKING ROOT

ANOTHER thing unmistakably plain is that if the Aryans had been nothing but fighting men they would never have settled or won much. The land was an unwholesome wilderness. The hardest of work was indispensable. Coaxed and helped by their wives, they cleared the woods and drained the swamps. They changed the shaggy forests into a bright and sparkling country of blooming fields and gardens and happy villages. What a fine land they had made of it before Alexander the Great came plundering in, and what an enormous amount of work had gone to the making of it!

The mere physical exertion, however great, was the least of their task. The malaria and other microbes were more deadly than the "Dasyus," and it gives one a strange sensation to read in the Rig-Veda (vii. 89) to-day the prayer of an Aryan sick of dropsy, and shuddering at death that seemed too soon. It was over thirty centuries ago, and the little more of life which he craved seems to us such a trifle in the retrospect. One cannot help hoping that he recovered, though it does not matter now. The "Varuna" he cried to was the encompassing

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sky, the upholder of Heaven and Earth. "Varuna" was "in us and around us." "No creature can wink without Varuna." As our Moslem friends express it, this was "one of the many beautiful names of God." To him the sick man prays:

"Not yet, O King Varuna, O may I not yet go down into the house of clay: have mercy, spare me, Mighty Lord!

"Thirst has come upon Thy worshipper, though I am standing in the midst of the waters: have mercy, spare me, Mighty Lord!

"O Varuna, whatever the sin may be whereby we poor mortals offend You in Heaven, behold, the darkness of our minds leads us to disobey Thy law, not knowing what we do: chastise us not for the iniquities which we have done in ignorance!"

What the ancient "Palefaces" had to do or die was what the later "Whites" find impossible —to live and be healthy and be fruitful and multiply in the Tropics. Perhaps they found that feat the easier because they had to do another—manual labour in the same locality. "Impossible!" cry all politicians and historians. Behold, the impossible has been done! How they did it we can only guess. They had all our faults but one. The chief difference between

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them and us is that they adhered, as their descendants still adhere, to the *family life.*

It is the height of nonsense to talk as many do of the family life as *necessarily* followed by the anarchic individualism of modern Europe. It is more in harmony with history to say that family life is the final form of civilization. The savage African negroes have had for endless centuries the individualism and the belief in private property and the contempt of the family which mark the most "civilized" of city-vermin to-day; and there is hardly a negro in Africa who could not quickly learn to squander millions upon his comfort and still need more. It is true that in Rome, when it became the capital of an empire, the family life was lost. But that was the reverse of a blessing, and hastened the ruin of Rome. Is modern Europe to stagger blindly down the same broad road? The way to death is easy. If England has to teach the Indians to live peaceably together as a nation, the Indians in turn, and still more the Chinese and Japanese, have to teach the English and the other Europeans, all of whom they have long preceded in the arts of civilized life, how to prosper without plundering, and how to labour fruitfully and abide in peace in this beautiful world, desisting from running

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idly round it as we do, like the damned in Dante's Hell.

We have to learn that the "love of a higher standard of comfort," which our economists preach, has never needed any preaching, and is more often the instinct of a gluttonous savage or a spoiled child than the mark of a civilized man. Plain living and high thinking must become to us what they are in Asia—the only great ideal. Another lesson is the absolute need of family life for humanity, and, not to put the matter too sentimentally, that it is better for young men to dress and feed plainly and work hard for wives than to stand in queue at the doors of—what shall we call them?—"places of amusement," or crowd as parasites in rich men's rooms. In short, the "White Man's Burden" in Asia to-day is more like a schoolboy's satchel than he yet suspects. And what airs he does give himself!

Let us return to the Rig-Veda. Filled with a keen sense of our own defects, we may feel comforted to discover that the Aryan pioneers were at least as conceited and ignorant as ourselves, and were merely kept right by their narrower circumstances. The poverty, from which they were continually begging the gods to deliver

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them, was a blessing in disguise. To them fair India was not a "land of regrets," but a joyful motherland. They never even thought of re-crossing the mountains. Yet they had no shipments of fresh young men sent out every year to fill their ranks. They had to do their own fighting and working and breed their own recruits. There was no room in their society for the "monks and nuns of Beelzebub" or of any other kind. So marriage was universal, and rather early than late. Their marriage customs were various and strange, but there was no social evil, and a people in which family life prevails is to an individualistic people like a land of verdant hills and fruitful fields to the shifting sands of the desert. Thus it was that the Aryans *took root* in India.

Though they did not live in the least like Tommy Atkins (or buried early the few of their number that did), and though they worked where even an energetic Yankee would look around for a nigger to drive—a trick they also learned in time—it must not for a moment be supposed that in the early centuries of drudgery their lives were dismal, or that they might ever be compared to the squalid slaves of the mills in Bombay or in many another modern factory town. We can see

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them yet, if we look closely at their songs, rejoicing in the healthy, open-air industry of village life. Here is one exquisite hymn to the setting sun, the god whose name might be placed in Hindu fashion at the top of this essay—Savitrī, the Stimulator (ii. 38) :

"Now Savitrī his chariot of light
Has stopped, and from the yoke his steeds let go;
By his command comes everywhere the night;
E'en they that creep like serpents creep more slow.

The woman weaving folds her web outspread;
The smiths amidst their work let hammers fall;
Birds fly to nests, and cattle seek their shed,
For homeward Savitrī disperses all."

If to us this is vivid, think what it was 3000 years ago. The last line alone brings before the mind like a picture the clusters of men that had gathered then as they do now in the villages, talking together as the day was ending, and rising, stretching themselves and yawning as darkness falls, and then, in groups that grow ever smaller, with frequent halts for one word more, scattering, slouching, toddling home.

5. MAX MÜLLER AND THE WEATHER

MAX MÜLLER was undoubtedly right in the theory that in the Aryan gods we have to deal with the elemental forces amidst

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which we live and breathe. It is a cheap joke to say it is talk about the weather. The weather matters little to a modern scribe, who seldom looks at the sky except to see whether he needs an umbrella. To the white pioneers in India, a tropical land, bordered by the highest hills in the world, crowned by eternal snow, the changes of the weather meant wealth or famine, often life or death. And then, how grand it was!

The Indra, who was their favourite, was the god of the air, an *almighty* Ariel! He wielded the lightning and led the Maruts or gods of the storm. It was he who fought the demons of drought and darkness and gave rain to the earth; and no one who has ever enjoyed a great tropical thunderstorm can wonder why Indra became so eminent. Instead of little furtive flashes and some rattling and rumbling, scarcely heard amidst the traffic of the streets, imagine the sky split open in the night from top to bottom with blinding fire; or, in the quaint metaphors of the Rig-Veda, the dark night "uncovered" with "red rays" of "brilliant light," and with sheet lightning "as with a sea of milk" (ii. 34); so that the world is lit up and the eyes of the gods of the Storm are "like the sun when the mist is scattered." . . . "The earth trembles with fear

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of their onset. She sways like a full ship that goes rolling" (v. 59). While thus "the upper sky makes wide, wide room to let the Storm go by" (viii. 20), so continuous is the light on earth that armies camped at a distance of miles might see each other as well as in daylight. Then comes the darkness again, with a crash wherein artillery would sound like pop-guns, and the rain gushes down to "moisten the earth with the juice of sweetness" (v. 54).

"You shake the very ridge of heaven" (i. 166), sang a prehistoric Byron to the Maruts. "You shake both earth and heaven like the hem of a garment" (i. 37); "making the rocks tremble" (i. 39). . . . "Then every Lord of the forest is frightened at your racing past"—the very lions crouching timidly—and "every shrub flies out of your way, *whirling round and round like chariot wheels*" (i. 166). What a living picture of a cyclone!

There is nothing more lovable about the Aryans than their delight in the "laughing lightning," as they call it (v. 52). "The lightnings smile upon the earth when the Maruts shower down fatness" (i. 168). Byron himself could not have given a happier send-off to the gods of the Storm than this conclusion of one hymn in their praise: "When they are departing, *call after them as to*

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old friends, and praise them with your song, for they love you!" (v. 53). Here is a verse of a similar hymn worth quoting too: "They are bold, they are bold, they are friends of the strong; as they march on their way they protect all the brave" (v. 52). The open admiration of the tempest gives the key to Aryan sentiments. *They* did not tremble like the crouching lions or blackskins, but rejoiced unfeignedly as they praised from the heart the Heavenly Power who "holds the thunderbolt in His hands and makes the most brilliant waters flow freely for men" (i. 165), while His attendants are "stirring up and pouring out many clouds, like the real friends that they are" (i. 166).

So confident and joyful are the hymns to the gods of stormy weather that it is hard to doubt as one reads that the singers are sometimes bantering the women, who were probably backward in this part of their worship. The eager rushing of the winds is compared to "women going to a feast" (x. 168); and the voice of thunder, sometimes jocularly compared to the lowing of cows, was once (i. 167) said to be "like unto an eloquent woman, lifting up her voice in public"—a prehistoric suffragette! This reminds us of the happy widower in the Scottish song. He was

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sure that his wife was not in hell, "The De'il could ne'er abide her."

> "I rather think she's up aloft,
> And imitating thunder.
> For why? methinks I hear her voice
> Tearing the clouds asunder."

Of course it is matter of opinion that the passage in the Rig-Veda is humorous. The writer did not add, "This is a joke," and the humour is not quite so obvious as in another Sanskrit saying, which is suggestive of much quiet chuckling in days gone by:

> "'O yes, the fiddler is a clever fellow,'
> Remarked the ox, 'But have you heard me bellow?'"

Nobody has ever doubted that this was fun, or indeed that the Aryans had a sense of humour. But the passage from the Rig-Veda has hitherto been taken seriously. Let readers judge for themselves and hear Max Müller (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxii., pp. 272, 275, 276). He translates the whole verse thus:

"There clings to the Maruts one who moves in secret, like a man's wife (the lightning), and who is like a spear carried behind, well-grasped, resplendent, gold-adorned; there is also with them Vak (the voice of thunder), like unto a courtly, eloquent woman." The commentary

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runs: "*If*, in our verse, we take Vak in the sense of thunder, but as a feminine, it seems to me that the poet, speaking of the lightning and thunder as the two companions of the Maruts, represents the first, Rodasī, or the lightning, as the recognized wife, hiding herself in the house, while the other, the loud thunder, is represented as a more public companion of the Maruts, distinctly called vidatheshu pagrā (verse 6), a good speaker at assemblies. This contrast, *if it is really what the poet intended*, throws a curious light on the social character of the Vedic times, as it presupposes *two classes of wives*, not necessarily simultaneous, however — a housewife, who stays at home and is not much seen, and a wife who appears in public and takes part in the society and conversation of the sabhā (the assembly-room) and the vidathas (the meetings). The loud voice of the thunder as well as the usual hiding of the lightning might well suggest this comparison." . . . "Vidathya means . . . distinguished at vidathas, meetings for social, political, or religious purposes." . . .

The only comment to be ventured on this commentary is that there is much virtue in an *if;* and that *if* the venerable savant had drawn such inferences in the hearing of the Aryans, or any of

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their wives, he might not have lived to make any subsequent remarks. But they had disappeared so long ago that he had them at discretion, and it is not libel to invent stories about the dead. If it were, how could history be written? Besides, he did so much for their memory that the Aryans could not continue angry with Max Müller. If he could meet them in the other world they would save him from the angry women, we may be sure, and give him hilarious welcome!

6. ARYAN ORGIES

SO much did the Aryans resemble ourselves that gambling and drinking were their chief amusements. Many a fortune was flung away, and many a life and family ruined by the dice-box; and, to do them justice, they cursed their folly and wondered why the dice had such fascination ever fresh. As for drinking, however, they seem never to have repented, and, strange to say, perhaps they never had cause to repent. There are only two gods in the Rig-Veda more often mentioned than Soma, and Soma was just the plant from the fermented juice of which they made their wine or beer. It is changing metaphor into dogma to suppose that they imagined Soma

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was anything else than the living "yellow juice" they loved.

Thus we read that it impelled the voice as a rower his boat. "The purifying Soma, like the sea rolling its waves, has poured forth songs and hymns and thoughts." The adjective here is probably nothing but an allusion to what everybody knows, that men incline to speak the truth in liquor. The whole passage recalls the songs that Horace wrote to the glory of Bacchus, whom he beheld amidst the rocks retired, dictating hymns (*Odes*, ii. 19), and inspired by whom he declares that he will sing "something peerless, something fresh and never said before" (iii. 25). Similar sentiments are found in Burns. Indeed, there is quite a surprising likeness between the best of the Soma songs and the songs of Burns, particularly the quaint ballad of "John Barleycorn," which caught the fancy of Goethe. The apostrophes to Drink in the writings of Burns, half-humorous, half-serious, are in the very vein of the Rig-Vedas—a great deal closer to them than anything known to me in any other literature.

What is specially worthy of remark is that the Aryans seem to have caroused like intelligent beings, like Horace, Burns or Goethe and their friends. They drank their Soma, wine or beer,

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not to forget themselves in drunken oblivion, but to loosen their tongues and to warm their hearts, while they thankfully rested awhile. They were not afraid to look round upon life. In their most protracted bouts they were seldom drunk—"they werena fou, but just had plenty"; and they sang as the birds do, as Goethe's minstrel did, for the mere pleasure of singing. The dangerous art of distilling alcohol was apparently unknown to them. This may have saved them from the worst temptations.

The whole of the ninth Mandala of the Rig-Veda is filled with Soma songs; but to imagine what were the orgies of the primitive Aryan pioneers from the cold perusal of their ditties done into prose, read and not sung, and read in ignorance of the innumerable allusions that enriched the words—to do this is impossible, and to try to do it gives one an eerie feeling.

"I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed!"

Take for example a ditty that was quoted in many newspapers when Mr Griffith's translation was published some years ago. "Flow, Soma, flow for Indra's sake" was the burden of all the

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stanzas. It must have been often sung in the villages and in the forest glades, their only banquet-halls. One could easily imagine the bystanders uplifting, repeating and expanding the chorus, as harmonious spirits carousing are wont to do; but it was hard to believe that they would listen patiently to all those verses. No, the chorus-singers must have talked through most of them, as one can yet observe on similar occasions, as one can see in any drawing-room. The explanation is obvious. The editorial scribes have written, along with the words that made the air popular, whatever rubbish they knew to the same tune. So no apology is needed for restoring this antique song by omitting all the stanzas except three, and setting them to a modern air ("Drink, puppy, drink") for the pleasure of those who feel that to poetry and dancing, both alike, the music is as needful as the daylight is to flowers.

"Here's to the wheelwright, who mends the broken wheel,
And the doctor that's mending our bodies;
And here's to the parson who teaches how to feel,
When in doubt what the will of our God is

CHORUS—

Then drink the Soma, drink, and let all the Soma drink
Soma, Soma, it's you should be knowing
That if Indra you would please,
Lord of Hëaven, Earth and Seas,
You've to flow, and for ever be flowing!

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Wheelwright, doctor, parson, they're all a tricky set ;
So am I, and my father, and mother ;
As cows run to pasture, men seek what they can get,
And there's no sinner better than another !

CHORUS—

Then drink the Soma, drink, and let all the Soma drink !
Soma, Soma, it's you should be knowing
That if Indra you would please,
Lord of Heaven, Earth and Seas,
You've to flow, and for ever be flowing !

The frog takes to water to drink in it and drench ;
So does man to his favourite folly ;
There's some, that are young, live for nothing but a wench,
And there's some love to laugh and be jolly !

CHORUS—

Then drink the Soma, drink, and let all the Soma drink !
Soma, Soma, it's you should be knowing
That if Indra you would please,
Lord of Heaven, Earth and Seas,
You've to flow and for ever be flowing ! "

To suit the melody the chorus is expanded a good deal as poetical licence in translation allows. Otherwise, the only thing that calls for remark is the date. The sentiments that seem mere commonplace and up-to-date have a strange significance when we recollect that the Aryans may have been singing the song before the days of Moses, in hours of relaxation as darkness fell, in the villages or round the camp fires, and that the ditty was so much admired that it has been carried in the

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minds of men ever since. *There* is a success beyond the dreams of poets! It is worth while being anonymous to succeed like that.

Apart from its poetical merits the song is very suggestive. The lovelight in a woman's eye, the light which first suggested dreams of heaven—as if there could be anything better than earth with such visions upon it—we cannot see it as the shadows are falling, but those for whom it was meant, they did not fail to see! "That is the way that boys begin," and it plainly always was. Behold them slinking off there, see how they affect not to hear the laughter of the older men, who in bucolic phrase have "made their market," and to whom therefore the hours of courting—"'tween the gloamin' and the mirk when the kye come hame"—are nothing now but a pleasant recollection—mixed with dreams!

"Wheelwright, doctor, parson, they're all a tricky set, so am I," etc., is mock modesty on the part of the village craftsman. He thinks, and always has thought since the beginning of time, what Tolstoi also thought, that the manual labourer is the honest man who keeps the world's work going, and that the others are tricksters who exploit him.

Medical science was carried to a high pitch

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among the Hindus in time. One cannot help wondering what particular antediluvian microbe was in fashion at that moment. We cannot even guess. However, there is happily no room for doubt as to what the inspired poet was pleased to think about it.

The priests, too, is it not strange to see them scoffed at in Scriptures? What a thought! As if one had never read of "scribes and Pharisees," and did not know how sensible they are of each other's shortcomings! The song reminds one of what is otherwise made certain—that the Aryans were in no sense a priest-ridden people.

The building of temples was a fashion that must be dated many centuries after the Rig-Veda. In the course of time the Brahmins substituted for the few score names of early days the millions of deities that make the modern Hindu Pantheon more crowded than the lanes of Calcutta. "Let the people be deceived since they like it," the Brahmins had to mutter; but that belongs to later epochs and mixed populations. In the days of the Rig-Veda they used a plain brick altar, and every man could be his own priest when he liked. A few spoonfuls of Soma spilled upon the ground, or a little butter flung upon the fire, was their inexpensive sacrifice. On festive

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occasions they would ceremoniously slaughter cattle and eat and drink like Homer's heroes.

It was not in temples made with hands that the Aryans prayed, but in Nature's realms of worship, gazing in fearless admiration at the wonders and beauties all round, and at the sun and the innumerable stars. What keeps the sun from falling? we find them asking themselves, and—where do the stars go by day? So fresh and childlike was the outlook of their manly minds! In time they learned the great truth that night is the normal colour of the sky, and that the brilliant radiance of the sun hides from us in the day the rest of the universe, just as lamps may do at night. Then they watched the stars all the more intently and lovingly. They discovered the planets, observed some of the fixed stars, calculated the solar year correctly, and counted not only the changes of the moon, but her pathways through the heavens.

They were superstitious in a way, but it was in the way of brave men whose knowledge is limited, and not as cowards are. From the hymns we learn that in the woods they seemed to hear strange voices—and who has not, that ever lingered there? But of the mocking genius of the woods they gaily sang (x. 146): "She

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never hurts, unless one goes too near her." Far different were they from the timid hordes of medieval India, whose sooty superstitions and ugly mumbo-jumbos were as yet hidden in far-off southern forests and in the depths of time.

To the Aryan, the priest was no miracle-man. At the best, he might be a poet, and boast, like Daudet's friend on a holiday among the peasantry, "it's we who make the psalms!" At any rate his memory had to be well stored with them; and the old song, just put into modern shape, shows how they could laugh at any prigs among the priests—any primeval ritualists that might try by the carriage of their bodies to conceal the defects of their minds.

Think of this song as we may, we cannot sing it and not feel the fun of it. How we should have wondered if the fabled grains of wheat had really been taken from the hands of a mummy and had grown when planted! How much more wonderful it is that we, at such a distance of time and space, and over differences of thought and feeling that sever more than any time or space, can join in spirit in the sing-songs of primeval pioneers They have departed to the elements as dust and air; yet see—these are the very thoughts of their hearts. We can hear an echo of their voices

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uplifted in song, mingled with the distant sound of laughter. Many generations have been born, lived and died since that sound of song and laughter was stilled, but it is not a fiction, good reader. It is a fact, though a dim and distant one, and we can no more doubt its existence than we can doubt our own.

7. THE REAL LIGHT OF ASIA

WE can understand their laughter; but the open-eyed wonder wherewith the Aryans beheld the living world around them, their various ways of worshipping the

> . . . "Spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things. . . ."

how can we ever enter into that?

Of one thing we may be sure. If we fail, the impediment is in ourselves. The world is ever young. As one of the Rig-Veda poets beautifully sings (i. 113), as if beckoning to us, and to the ages yet unborn that are to follow us:—

> "Gone are the men who, in ages passed away,
> First saw the flush of the light of early day.
> *We* see it still, the same though they are gone:
> Those who are coming after too shall see the dawn."

Next favourite to Indra, who had 250 hymns,

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was Agni with 200, a good second. Soma was third with one hundred, and the rest were nowhere. The respectable Yama, the King of the dead, and reputed the Columbus who discovered the other world, had only three!

Who then was Agni? The word is akin to the Latin "ignis" and our "ignite"; but neither "fire" nor "light" nor any single word can convey to our minds what they called "Agni." It meant the warmth of life, for which reason they used to invoke Agni at weddings. It also meant the brilliance of the sun, and the radiance of the sky and all that sparkled there, the dazzling flash of lightning and the glare of conflagration; "eating and chewing the forest with sharp tooth, frightening the birds with his sparks, shearing the hairs of the earth as a barber the beard, while supporting the sky with his pillars of smoke." It was Agni too that shone in their lamps, or sparkling from their torches in the woods was the opener of their paths, and made harmless the deadly snakes and the poisoned spikes that were stuck in the ground by the cowardly "Dasyus." It was Agni that at home was laughing on the hearth or the altar, "born from the wood and strong from his birth." "Smiling through his flaming yellow hair and tawny beard," he was

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"for ever beautiful." They sang of him as of another Jehovah that he "slumbered not nor slept" and "grew not old." Of the hymns to Agni there is one ascribed to a woman (x. 86), begging his blessing upon marriage. Here is one prayer entire (i. 97) as they used it. Cannot we hear the worshippers shouting the chorus?

"Banishing our trouble with Thy Light, Agni!
O shine, shine upon us and bless us with plenty,
Banishing our trouble with Thy Light!

Longing for fruitful fields and open paths and riches,
we offer up our sacrifice to Thee, Agni,
Banishing our trouble with Thy Light!

Glorious among us are the open-handed Lords, but
glorious over all art Thou, Agni,
Banishing our trouble with Thy Light!

Thy blessing brings the babes, wherewith we multiply,
Banishing our trouble with Thy Light!

When the mighty beams of Agni burst to every side
resplendent—
Banishing our trouble with Thy Light!

For, Agni, it is Thou indeed that lookest everywhere and
shinest round the world—
Banishing our trouble with Thy Light!

Then bear us through the enemies whom Thou all-
seeing seest, bear us in Thy boat,—
Banishing our trouble with Thy Light!

O'er the deeps of evil like a rushing stream, O! ferry
us to pleasant places on the farther side,
Banishing our trouble with Thy Light!"

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There is no reference here to the life after death. The singer felt with Goethe that the Sun saw all his sorrows. It is the antipodes of other-worldliness.

Perhaps the idea in the minds of the worshippers of Agni could be best conveyed to us in this new time by metaphors as well as words that are new. Most words are worn-out metaphors, and we are striving to return in spirit to a time when things were fresh and the world was young. It is worth an effort to see what men saw then. Methinks that, following the footsteps of the long-departed seers of India, we have passed through the valleys and over the forest-mantled ridges up to the clear hill-tops, from which we can see the world spread out below us, flooded with sunshine which fills the dark places of life and brings its mysteries into the light of day. From this high point of view, the mumbo-jumbos of superstition look tawdry. Terrible no more, they are not hateful nor contemptible, but rather touching to look at—the cast-off clothes of the childhood of the race. There may still be a use for these old things. "Men are but children of a larger growth." Meanwhile, let us lift up our eyes and look around, and behold the truth. It seems so plain that the only thing

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perplexing us is why we failed to see it sooner.

"The World is Light : we're never dark
Until we cease to be :
Life goes through matter like a spark
Of Electricity.

It never stops ; it never ends ;
And, as it passes through,
The light of life through dust it sends,
And shines in me and you.

It passes on, as pass it must,
In other shapes to be :
Our dust returns again to dust,
Like foam into the sea."

The hymns to the great Immortal, Agni, may well remind us that the Indian Aryans were related to the Persians. We know how the Persians developed. A few of their descendants still cherish the Sacred Fire. As the rod of Aaron ate up its neighbours, so Agni among the Parsees displaced the other gods ; but that was merely one instance of a tendency visible throughout the Rig-Veda to praise each god as if he were the only one. Indra, Agni and Soma, and others too in turn, are praised in this way. The goddess Aditi is identified with all the gods and men ever born. We need not speculate as to the meaning of these hard sayings. It is given in plain words more than once by the singers them-

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selves. "The One Being is named by the priests in many ways; they call it Agni, Yama, Matarisvan." This is in the first "mandala." In the last we find the same thought (x. 114):— "Priests and poets make into many what is but one."

If this means anything it is the identical truth seen by Confucius some centuries later and embodied in his famous statement: — "My doctrine is that of an all-pervading unity" (*Confucian Analects*, Legge's translation, iv. 15).

These are not glimpses of a truth half-seen and lost from sight again. The inspired wisdom which saw so deeply has never been forgotten. If to-day a Chinese or Indian scholar of first-class intellect happens to be familiar with the terms of European philosophy, he describes the fundamental convictions of the East to us as Pantheism. No word could be better, for it states the conception which comes nearest to what all the best minds of India and China have for many centuries seen to be true. If it does not quite show us what they think, the reason is that it suggests to us Semitic gods by the very negation of them, and the Asian belief is not a negation at all. It is an earnest affirmation. The essence of it is that the Universe is one

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living whole. The "living spirit" of it, if we must so speak, has no shape, either human or another, but is in us and around us, below and above us—the Eternal reality wherein all things have being.

The "personal" gods and devils and saints, male and female, and the prayers and the sacrifices of worshippers, how foolish they seem to an enlightened mind! As for the materialism of the mob, alternating with superstitions, it is only another aspect of human folly, reminding one of childhood. It is not a thing to fret about. Like the materialism of dogs and cats it is an incident of their nature—a thing to pity, not to punish, for it bears its own punishment in itself.

In vain do Europeans babble of dead matter and inspired gospels to men who have grasped the truth. Like Galileo in the clutches of the Inquisition, abjuring with his lips the discovery that the earth was moving, but murmuring or thinking, "it moves all the same," so they may listen to us, learning what little we have to teach them in mechanical arts, but our materialism runs off them like water off the backs of the sea-gulls. "The Universe dead matter!" The thought makes them smile. It is a delusion pardonable in dull mechanics. But their politeness is great, and

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they say little. "You Athenians are children," the Egyptian priests may have said to Solon and his companions, but intelligent Asiatics are not so brusque. Does any man argue with children? Only, they feel within themselves, "The Universe is living, all the same!"

"The so-called conflict between Religion and Science," wrote Mr Laing recently in *Human Origins*, a book showing much knowledge, impartiality and intelligence, "is at bottom one between two conflicting theories of the Universe —the first that it is the creation of a personal God, who constantly interferes by miracles to correct His original work; the second, that whether the First Cause be a personal God or something inscrutable to human faculties, the work was originally so perfect that the whole succession of subsequent events has followed by Evolution acting by invariable laws. The former is the theory of orthodox believers, the latter that of men of science and of liberal theologians who, like Bishop Temple, find that the theory of 'Original Impress' is more in accordance with the idea of an omnipotent and omniscient Creator, to whom 'a thousand years are as a day,' than the traditional theory of a Creator constantly interfering to supplement and amend

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His original creation by supernatural interferences."

Such is the dull dilemma presented to young Europe: on one hand, the personal God of the Churches, and on the other, what Goethe contemptuously called the "Clockmaker God," for that and nothing else is the meaning of the "Original Impress" theory. It is partly the result of seeing nothing in life but matter and motion, a clockwork thing; but it is also partly caused by the vulgar notion that idleness is the mark of superiority. "Be good enough to bow down, ladies and gentlemen, and reverence the God who incarnates your loftiest ideals. You do as little as you can. He does nothing. He just gave the first kick-off to our sun and the other stars, and left the Universe to take care of itself ever since!"

Reverence him! If wooden gods do nothing, they at least do all they can. But what is this? A living God who never does anything? Such a deity seems a contradiction in terms. Leave it to posterity as a curiosity of European superstition in the nineteenth century.

Contrast with it the faith in the living Universe, which fills the minds of the best men in the East, and which the wisest men in Europe have long

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taught in vain to us. The Universe may seem a charnel-house to the sportsman, as it is a place of carrion to the vulture; but it is *in fact* to the open eye and ear resplendent with beauty as the sun with light, and full of harmonies, "sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not." So far as we are brutes our lives are as dull as theirs; but our misery is of our own making. The road to happiness is to forget ourselves, and, seeing and doing daily what must be done, with the joyful and exact submission of sons to a father who *never makes mistakes nor forgives them*, study to see and hear ever better the infinite glories of this wonderful world, wherein "we are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our litfle life is rounded with a sleep!"

To find such a way of thinking in Chaucer or Rabelais, in Shakespeare or Goethe, cannot surprise us, for the worship of Nature has long been the esoteric doctrine of able men—the religion of all sensible people, which they do not speak about; but to find it in a collection of Hindu hymns of hoary antiquity, is not that a wonder? Yet there it is, the gospel wherefrom all true religions rise, whereto they all return, even as the rivers are filled from the ocean to which they flow.

Nevertheless, unless we would wilfully mis-

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understand them, we must not forget that the Aryans in general were as innocent of what we call philosophy as of what we call religion. They lived in communion with Nature, in close contact with her realities, and were too busy to be bothered with speculation.

It is pleasant to learn, as we may from the Rig-Veda, that the hideous Indian delusion of the transmigration of souls was spared the Aryans. It is a dreadful nightmare, which deprives men even of the hope of death. How happy they were in some things which they did not know!

What is more surprising is that the possibility of any life after death appears to have been a recent discovery and to have caused little or no excitement. In later Sanskrit books the matter is discussed. It is plain that, when they did talk it over, they had nothing but a royal contempt for what we call "other-worldliness" and think rather fine. There is no mistaking the scorn of the allusion to the rich among the "Dasyus," or dusky devils, who "adorn the bodies of the dead with gifts, with raiment, with jewels; imagining that thereby they shall attain the world to come." (*See* Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, ii. 396, edn. 1874.) This is quite in the tone of the speech attributed to Frederick, and certainly spoken more than once

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on a battlefield to runaway soldiers—"You sons of b——s, would *you* live for ever?"

The Aryans, however, scarcely seem to have discussed the matter at all. Like the strange man in the German fairy tale, they could not feel afraid. They rejoiced in the light, but they walked down into the darkness without blinking. There are some who pity them for this, and some who love them for it. The important point is that there is no doubt about it. For the rest, however we feel, let us not insult the dead with our pity! And as for the oblivion in which they dwell, it is the lot that awaits us all in the long run. What matters a little while? Besides, it is not their loss but ours that they are forgotten. They do not care for that. They need not. They never did! Gambling, fighting, drinking, working, they stormed across their corner of the world and asked for no man's pity. "They would live the same life over if they had to live again"; and here is what they sang as they stood in homespun garments round a new-made grave. What a strange fellow-feeling it gives us to listen to their distant voices. Hushed are they since before Confucius was born, or Moses; yet there they *were*, as real as the rocks and rivers, and we can hear them yet. With the mind's ears let

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us hear. Though they have gone so long before us, we can enter into their thoughts as they sang, for they meant all they said; and the sublime simplicity of their words has a beauty like that of the choicest flowers—not to be measured, and never to be surpassed (x. 18):

To the Departed:—
"Descend thou, here, to Mother Earth,
Kind, as the mother gave thee birth.
May she, in her soft, spacious arms,
Receive and keep thee safe from harms."

To the Earth:—
"Rise, Mother Earth, above the dead,
But weigh not heavy on his head.
Take, comfort, cover him, give rest,—
As mother baby takes to breast."

It is more than a mere coincidence that Homer had the same feeling as the Aryan psalmist towards the "life-giving earth," as he called it. So closely alike were their ways of thinking that a recent translator (Dr. Hawtrey), who probably never noticed the Sanskrit texts, uses the very metaphor of the Rig-Veda to translate what Homer remarked, when Helen wondered why she did not observe her brothers among the Greeks and supposed they might have been restrained by shame on her account (*Iliad*, bk. iii., 243, 244):

"So said she; they long since in Earth's soft arms were reposing,
There, in their own dear land, their fatherland, Lacedæmon."

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Sophocles, too, speaks of the "rugged all-nourishing earth"; but perhaps the nearest parallel to the Veda here is in *The Trojan Women*, the great humanitarian drama of Euripides, brought on the stage at Athens, 415 B.C. At the funeral of Hector's child, Astyanax, the chorus of women cries (to quote Murray's translation) :—

> "Child of the shield-bearer, . . .
> Great Earth, the All-mother
> Taketh thee unto her. . . ."

No country, not even Greece, was ever more lovable than the Indian, happy valleys, nestling among the mighty mountains, the abode of snow, with the rich wide plains spread out below them. No country was ever more beloved than it was by the Aryan men; but they could not linger—nor can we.

8. USEFUL LESSONS

AS a hungry man has no patience to learn anything but what helps him to provender, so men in general may turn reproachfully upon us, while we are peering through the obscurity of ages into the remote vistas of recorded time.

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"What is the use of it all?" they may demand. "Can *that* help *us* to peace and plenty? If, like Æneas, you go down among the dead, can you, like him, bring back new guidance for the living?"

In many ways, yes. It is a great thing to appreciate fairly the ancestors of the best men in India. Most of the Sikhs and Afghans, the real Brahmins everywhere and many other castes, Parsees for example, are probably as much the descendants of the Aryans of the Rig-Veda as the peoples of England, France and Germany are descendants of other Aryan tribes. When we realize this, and learn from their priceless Rig-Veda what manner of men they were, we can see the absurdity of treating such peoples as inferior races. The Indians in turn may become more tolerant of us if they see a likeness between us, beer-drinking beef-eaters that we are, and the ancient Aryans, their revered but rude forefathers. Thus both sides might begin to respect each other. That is the first step towards the solution of the Indian problem, which is not so difficult as it looks, but cannot be solved without facing the elementary facts.

Next to ignorancce in action, perhaps the worst thing possible is that contented ignorance which is now in fashion. It is often written that

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"East" (meaning the Asiatics) and "West" (meaning the Europeans) must forever be "mutually unintelligible," whatever that means. It is true in the same sense as that "sin is eternal." In other words, there always will be many Europeans unable to understand the Asiatics, and vice versa. But on either side intelligent people are certainly able to learn as much of the other side as they have a mind to. Some Japanese, for instance, understand the Germans better than almost any other Europeans do; and the Abbé Dubois knew the natives of southern India better than almost any other Indian ever did.

There is nothing very wonderful in all that. It would be more wonderful if such achievements were impossible, as some would have us believe they are. Europe is merely the western corner of the continent of which Asia is more than three quarters. Europe is the little apex of that gigantic triangle of land, and is in every way a part of it. There is not in Europe any kind of bird or beast, or any variety of men, there is not even a flower which has not its counterpart in Asia, though there is much in Asia which is unknown in Europe. Every superstition current in Europe to-day, as well as much of its science and philosophy, and many of its mechanical arts, came from Asia.

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From the Rig-Veda itself another obvious lesson may be learned, that people who have sacred books of that quality do well to be angry when they are bribed to neglect them, and to learn instead the legendary records of Jewish tribes, or the flap-doodle of modern English classics. The Mohammedans, too, besides the Koran, have plentiful literature of the highest quality.

The resemblance of the Rig-Veda Aryans to the Europeans in Africa and America has often been noted. Remembering this, the next point which we note is that in an experiment lasting many thousands of years, under circumstances more favourable for its success than can ever be repeated, the mixing of stocks—white, black and yellow—has been found disastrous. No man can doubt that India would have been happier if such mixtures had been generally avoided and restricted to a few exceptional cases. We find in India to-day not one or two or three nations to be reconciled, but a confused medley of hundreds or even thousands of castes who do not intermarry or associate freely or speak the truth to each other. Even the Mohammedans, in spite of their religion, are often broken up into similar groups. All the rest of the world put together does not offer such contrasts of humanity as

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India alone. There are traces there of the noblest breeds of Aryans, Semites and Mongols, and of the lowest savages, cannibals and worse, and of every possible kind between these extremes. The political disintegration resulting from these incoherences is the key to the whole history of India.

Writers who ought to have known better have flattered the English about the Indian Empire till we, the most honestly peaceful and least warlike of European nations, whom not even the Duke of Wellington and Lord Roberts could persuade to prepare to be able to defend ourselves, *we*, the Chinese of the West, who insist on leaving soldiering to the sons of the slums, and think war a crude kind of football, *we* have humbugged ourselves into the belief that *we* are warriors born and patent conquering heroes. No, no! In all seriousness we will leave that old-fashioned, ill-paid trade to benighted people—Turks, perhaps, who do not know better. Except for defensive purposes we mean to have nothing to do with war.

Whether it makes us more patient of Lord Roberts or not, it cannot do us any harm to recognize the plain fact that almost any European nation could have done what we have done in India. The French were doing it when we inter-

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vened. The Dutch would have done it if English and French had both stayed at home. French, Dutch and English, the European Indians were of many nations but of one species, and commonplace creatures compared to the heroic Babar, who started the Mogul Empire in 1526. Sir Alfred Lyall has pointed out how far his victories were superior to anything done afterwards. He conquered an India far better organized for resistance than we found it, and he had an army of only twelve thousand men all told, including the commissariat. For centuries before his day adventurous princes like himself, and soldiers of fortune, "knights-errant" up to date, had been plundering Hindustan, and the "riches of Golconda" had been scattered far and wide. The country had always had within it the materials for mighty armies, and some fighting men as good as any in the world; but its history is a monotonous story of mere impotence in politics. All Indian empires were built on sand.

Nothing is more absurd than the suggestion of many journalists that the history of China is like that. Kublai Khan was firmly established, in the days of Marco Polo (thirteenth century), as master of China and many other lands; but what we ought to know equally well is that he

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was the first of China's rulers who was not a Chinaman, that he tried to assimilate his "frowsy Tartars" to his new subjects, and that his dynasty and his Tartars were all flung out in the next century, leaving the Chinese once more able to boast they had no tyrants but their countrymen. The present dynasty came from Manchuria to the throne of China; but it came exactly in the same way as William of Orange, in that same century (seventeenth), came to the throne of England, *at the express invitation of the reforming party.* The Manchus were invited and supported by Chinamen, and have done their best to assimilate the Manchus and the Chinese, who are as closely akin as the Germans and the English.

It is not of China at all, but of India, that the tale of political impotence is truly told. Arabs and Persians, Afghans and Turks, Moguls and English, French and Portuguese—the myriad-minded Hindus could keep none of them out. Why? Because the Hindus were divided and disabled from trusting each other by castes.

One of them said lately, "We are so many that if we would all just *spit* together we would drown the English." So might they have drowned Babar and the Mogul armies. Why did they not do it? They could not combine.

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Then what are we to think of the English theory that castes can be ignored? To level the Sikhs and the Telugus, the Rajputs and the Bengalis, seems as unreasonable as it would be to make railways, ignoring the rivers and the mountains. "Equality is equity" is a natural maxim in Europe, where there is no racial difference worth mention from end to end. But in India any such principle is worse than false—it is incredible. It is at variance with the innermost convictions of the whole population; and even the pariahs, who alone might hear of it with pleasure, do not believe in it.

The Yankee poet jeered at England, saying—

> "She's praised herself until she fairly thinks
> There ain't no light in Nature when she winks."

The Yankees themselves, however, are quite as vain; and so is the mass of every big community, Hindus as much as the rest. The contrasts and confusions resulting from such feelings wherever races meet would be as delightfully amusing as any comedy if the consequences were not so often piteous beyond the dreams of tragedy.

There is nothing in Don Quixote more comic than the contrast between what the Europeans in Asia appear to themselves to be and what they appear to the Asiatics. First of all, the "natives"

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cannot easily discriminate, so that the angry Chinaman seldom pauses to distinguish the Portuguese mulatto variety of "foreign devil" and the "green-eyed" Pomeranian; and in truth the mulattoes unconsciously parody the "superior" Europeans, like the mule who could only speak of his mother the mare and forgot his father the ass.

Mulattoes and whites alike, the "Europeans" in Asia occasionally cherish to-day some of the craziest hallucinations of the Crusaders. Some of them, especially the scamps among them, seem to themselves a superior breed of men, elevating and sanctifying by their presence the dark masses around them. They feel like a blend of Jesus Christ and Julius Cæsar, and take to themselves the credit of martyrdom for bearing so grandly the "white man's burden," having given themselves the trouble to be born and taken a passage to the East. Nevertheless, the martyrs need all the rewards that fall to the lot of "conquering heroes." They hardly can distinguish one Asiatic race from another; and, with simplicity strangely separated from innocence, they impute to all the "natives" the depravity to be found in the slums of Shanghai and Calcutta. A recent English essayist of academic distinction seriously describes

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"that half of the world's inhabitants which dwells between the Arabian Gulf and the Sea of Japan as the world's slum population."

With equal seriousness the Japanese and the Chinese, the Persians and the Arabs, and the Hindus of every shade of colour and creed, differing about most other things, agree in detesting the European as a social nuisance, looking upon him as cruel, immoral and dirty; ignorant, stupid, unmannerly; mean, perfidious and tricky, and "as greedy as the grave." The Chinese are fond of pictures which represent the crucifixion of a pig, in mockery of Jesus; and on their stage they occasionally show their real sentiments, unhampered by any Lord Chamberlain. The Europeans appear as servants, the butts of jests, and on the smallest pretext their heads are chopped off, in the style of the amiable Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland.* There is a difference. It is that in the Chinese plays the chopping off of European heads is more than a joke. It is a serious performance, looked at with laughter and sounds of joy, but none the less seriously approved, and likely to be imitated on the first opportunity.

Perhaps the praiseworthy action of our Lord Chamberlain in respect of the *Mikado* might

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suggest something practicable to the Hague Convention. It really would be conducive to peace, and give the rabble of rowdies in both hemispheres an object-lesson in international courtesy, if China and Japan, and the American and European powers, agreed to prevent by law the production of plays which represented the natives of any other country in such a way as to excite hatred or contempt or racial animosity. No treaty is needed. Each country would attend to itself. The only question is—Which of them is to be the first to set so good an example?

The difficulty the Chinese would have in enforcing such a law can hardly be realized by us, so little can we see ourselves as the Asiatics see us. We heed too little what passes in the heads of these "sophisticated niggers." It is really worth while to know that, even to educated people in China (and elsewhere), the Europeans in general often appear as grotesque and repulsive bugbears, worse than the Barbary pirates of old in Europe, hungry savages, all the more hideous because armed with the latest weapons of civilization.

Give the Chinese their due. They are, as a rule, the most modest, candid and civilized of all the Asiatics. As long ago as 1817 a Chinaman wrote a description of life in London, with an

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intelligent and kind appreciation of its good points, which has hardly yet been equalled by any European account of Pekin or any other city in China. We laugh at their conceit, but it is very like our own. See that most delightful book, Col. Tcheng Ki Tong's *The Chinese Painted by Themselves*, and various recent magazine articles by other members of Chinese embassies; and behold there the national vanity disclosed in the same graceful and unconscious way as our own appears in the essays in the old *Spectator*. The Chinaman and Englishman are both unable to *suspect* that any race exists which is not likely to feel flattered if they treat it on terms of equality.

The Chinaman and Englishman are alike also in being matter-of-fact, so that, when the Chinese think so unkindly of us, we may, some of us, probably the best of us, begin to have misgivings about our own conduct, and all of us must prepare to encounter worse delusions among other Asiatics.

Oddly enough, it is in sexual matters that Europeans think themselves most superior to Asiatics, and it is precisely in such matters that every race in Asia is most confident of its superiority to the whites. There really is no appreciable difference; but neither side can believe that.

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We have to remember that in general the Europeans are most familiar with the dregs of Asia, and the Asiatics with the scum of Europe. The language used on both sides is unprintable, but not so an anecdote which once suggested a clue to the truth. In a trial before a European judge in our Indian Empire, a question in issue was whether a native lady had received grave provocation from another. Certain words not fully quoted, but apparently understood, were alleged to have been spoken. Supposing it was mere indecency that was being suppressed by consent, the judge acquiesced; but a witness inadvertently disclosed the secret. The words which both sides agreed were a great insult were in effect: "You are the wife of a European magistrate." It was ascertained that there was no suggestion of concubinage or adultery with a European. The sting of the insult lay in the implication that the person addressed was habitually immoral, because it was assumed that the wives of Europeans were so. This was expressly admitted on both sides before "the case went on."

It is surely self-evident that to bring together peoples who misunderstand each other so much is like smoking cigarettes in a powder magazine. That is why China and India can be quiet only as

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dynamite is. *It is not more intercourse that is now needed between the races, but less.* Social intercourse should be restricted as far as possible to the intelligent people on both sides. A stop has to be put to the craziest excesses of proselytizers, and traders must be restricted to the legitimate profits of business. The best of our merchants and missionaries ask no more. It is not legitimate trade or true religion that gives trouble, but intrigue, dishonesty and, above all, meddlesomeness and bad manners. There can be no prospect of abiding peace till Asiatics and Europeans respect each other; and that can never be until the Europeans have dismissed from their minds the idea that merely because they are Europeans they are better than the Asiatics. Rather let them lay to heart what is the first law of propriety in Asia: to chide no breather in the whole world except oneself, against whom one knows most faults.

A Chinese shopkeeper was once observed smiling at a Yankee missionary, who was talking hotly, entangled in an argument, not far from Mandalay. The shopkeeper was congratulating himself on his superior intellect and reticence and manners, and frankly admitted that to an inquiring onlooker. Yet he also admitted that his conceit

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was as great. He approved of what another Chinaman had painted over his shop: "Enlightenment finds its way, even among the outer barbarians." It was in proof of the superiority of Chinese culture that he added: "The missionary is so ignorant that he has not even learned to mind his own business." On this particular issue John Chinaman was unquestionably right; and if the Europeans in the East would only do as he did and mind their own business, their conceit would soon be as little provocative as his, and on every side the worship of the sacred fists might then abate.

Of all the lessons to be learned in Asia, however, perhaps the best is the need for every political unit to be homogeneous. China and Japan endure, because these peoples are able to mix among themselves more freely than people do anywhere in Europe, and so their social organisms are nowhere split by castes. The numerous old Indian empires and the Persian and Semitic, Greek and Roman empires, whose ruins are strewn around the Mediterranean Sea, seem all to have tended to go to pieces for lack of that same cohesion. Of course, it is not alone sufficient to make a nation strong; but it is more important than has been supposed. The climate alone has been

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blamed for the deterioration of the race in India; but the social isolation in groups, and the frequent intermarriage which that led to, has done as much harm perhaps as the heat of the climate. There are other evils attributable to caste, worse than weakness of body. The loss of veracity has been already mentioned. Akin to it is the loss of spirit, the spiritual paralysis caused by a life restricted by the prejudices of a narrow circle, and without the support of general public opinion. Every reformer has to break his shell and come out into the world outside his coterie. We do not enough consider how much even the courage to fight is an outcome of social solidarity. The wounded leopard limps aside to die alone. It was probably to indicate the inferiority of the Trojans that Homer compared them to a flock of noisy cranes, and contrasted them with the Achaians who "marched in silence, breathing courage, eager at heart to give succour man to man."

Nothing of this, no real social solidarity is possible in a community split into watertight compartments of castes; and such divisions are inevitable whenever there is a big mixture of stocks so widely apart as white and black and yellow. It is not likely that any man will ever be

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able to explain why this is so. It is a matter of sentiment, invincible on the side of the women, whose instincts do so often serve us well when manly plans do fail. At any rate, such instincts are as unalterable as the savour of the sea; and however unreasonable we may believe them, we should be unreasonable ourselves to ignore them. This is the *one* justification of the "White Australia" doctrine, but it is one that is enough alone. It would be difficult to imagine any price too high to pay to keep castes out of Australia, and castes cannot be kept out if coloured labour of any kind is let in. "No immigrants whom we cannot assimilate" is an instinctive cry, but it is wiser than any worldly wisdom. Resist the beginnings is the rule. Let *one* India be enough for the world. By all means let the Commonwealth grow, but let it be in strength as well as in size, and without any mischievous mixtures. Why are not the unemployed crowds at home carried out in thousands, to settle on the land first of all, whatever else may follow? They should go in families, as white men were wont, not solitary wretches, like slaves. Away with the bourgeois beatitudes! The curse of God is written upon them! They are the road to death. The most horrible thing one hears of Australia is that big

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families on the land are discouraged. The deserts of Scotland, the waste countrysides of England and Ireland are bad enough ; but in Australia such a thing is treason to the race. Let landlords be made to learn that by all the laws of God and man, of Nature and convention alike, the State is the only landowner, and no individual can be more than a kind of trustee and leaseholder. When that is better known the waste lands shall fill up.

Even to-day, before the arrival of reinforcements long overdue, there is no need of surrender. There must not be a thought of it. Let death seem preferable. The present exiguous white population of the Commonwealth and New Zealand, if a few of them were employed to study the arts of homicide with the very latest implements, and the adult men were all armed and drilled to co-operate in any butcheries required, would by their unity of spirit be able to face the world in arms, and repel with a look invaders who could easily walk over a hundred millions of disunited, whining and lying mongrels.

Soon the white population might increase to many millions of magnificent men of the fine old Aryan stock if only they are admonished in time by the warnings of history and decline to be parasites, decline to commit "race suicide," and,

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following their best instincts, to themselves be true. Do they wish to be a feeble handful of shabby-genteel degenerates and gentlemen's gentlemen, studious to do nothing but only the slave-driving of a mixed population for a century or two, or to grow into a mighty nation of brave men and able workers, a nation fit to endure while the world endures, filling and in every sense occupying the fair southern world now theirs? It rests with themselves to be or not to be. They are trustees in world-history for all the whites, if they only knew it; nay, trustees for humanity, for the yellow stock is as good as the white, and it is the equal interest of both to stand apart so far as to prevent castes in any country, so that each kind may develop to its best. How is that to be done? The yellows feel the need of separation as much as the whites; so a peaceful partition of the world should be possible. Such is the Sphinx-riddle of fate awaiting an answer in the Pacific Seas.

These are the thoughts that arise as we turn from the vision of the far-off Aryan India to its modern counterparts; but these glances adown the depths of time are through a confused medium, saturated with our hopes and fears: and we gladly revert to the unchangeable past, so far

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away and yet so distinct. Nothing is wiser than meditation on what is to be, but nothing is more unprofitable than speculation on what might have been. If we do not like the past history of humanity we may begin to suspect we do not understand it; for it, if only we could see it, is the one inspired message to us all from the Living One who sleepeth not nor dieth.

In vain do the idol-worshippers dream of winning favour and becoming sons or clients of His and so "getting special terms." It is a natural human hope, but it is not true, it cannot come to pass. The ways of God are just and nothing else. Mercy to sinners is injustice to those who suffer by their sins. The defects of human laws mislead us. Against these men may have to sin in acting justly, so that too often "virtue itself of vice must pardon beg." So long as we fancy that we can make a law of anything which we agree upon, we do well to be merciful in execution and not practise our laws too rigorously: but the laws we live by obeying, the laws innate in this universe, are not subject to exceptions. The Spirit of Nature which is God is just, both in its patience and in rewards and punishments; and there is never any reprieve. Happily also there is never any haste.

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There is no haste, and we may shudder as we add, there is no rest. It is certain that he who is writing, and all who read this, will quickly pass away; and it is certain that hundreds of thousands of years hence the tides of human life will still be surging over this old world of ours. To those far-off generations—too far-off for us to see so much as their complexions, and whereof all we know is that they will be the children of mankind now alive—to them we may pass on the greeting of our kindred Aryan souls who preceded us into the darkness a few thousand years. Whether the message arrives or not, the crowds will be there to receive it; and we—well, it will no longer signify anything to us, for we shall be wherever God has sent us.

"Gone are the men who, in ages passed away,
First saw the flush of the light of early day.
We see it still, the same though they are gone:
Those who are coming after too shall see the dawn."

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III

A DROUGHT

IT is an old joke, renewed continually with nearly every batch of whites coming out to our tropical Juggernaut, that some of the new men cheerily remark "Another fine sunny morning!" for a while, before they subside into the indifference of the residents. Away from the changing skies of Europe, however, they are soon accustomed to the monotony of our weather, and, like the rest of us, cease to look up:

> "But each day brings its petty dust
> Our soon-choked souls to fill;
> And we forget because we must
> And not because we will."

There are a few weeks or so about the beginning and the end of the rains when one looks up occasionally "for a sign"; and the storms that do sometimes come are stupendous. But they are so rare that people feel about them as Dr Johnson said of the Giant's Causeway rocks, that

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while they may be well worth seeing in passing, they are not worth going to see.

When a drought is endangering the food of multitudes the sky is pitiless, like an open furnace. Men look at it askance, or hurriedly. At such a time in the Tropics the sky is often almost as trying to human vision as the sun itself can be in Europe. So it is not very surprising, perhaps, that the best description of a drought which I have anywhere found is in the Chinese *Odes*, or classical songs, edited by Confucius himself. Terrible as the sun can make a Chinese sky too, it is not there so overwhelming as in India. For the complete English version and notes upon this hymn see Legge's *Chinese Classics*, iv. pp. 528-534; but in the version given here of four of the stanzas (from a book of Chinese Songs and Sayings, not yet published), no liberties have been taken. The pretty phrase of "Silver Stream" for what we call the Milky Way is the Chinese name, and it is so much prettier than ours that, ever since I read it, I have no patience with the other. Commentators date the Ode 821 B.C.

The lesson Nature teaches men by droughts is to irrigate well; and that has been better learned in China than elsewhere. So, perhaps, it is a long

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time since the words now to be quoted could be an accurate description of anything in China. And in religious thinking, too, they are at least as modern as ourselves. But in India we still have droughts like this; and the people still pray to their gods in this old-fashioned way, glaring gloomily at the infidel whites:

I

"The Silver Stream was shining,
And turning in the sky;
The people were repining,
The fields were bare and dry.
The King appealed to Heaven—
'Why must we starve again?
What crime is unforgiven
That God withholds the rain?' . . .

II

Too long, O Lord! Thy terror
Has entered in my soul.
Forgive mine unknown error:
I feel Thy thunder roll.
The drought like thunder smiting,
We all will die in Chow!
In fate and fears uniting
Are King and people now! . . .

III

Too long, O Lord! The rivers dry,
The hills are burning pyres.
The Devil Drought, he makes us die,—
Goes scattering flames and fires.

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The heart within me's stifled, hot,
  May God his mercy show !—
Our heroes' shades, they help us not !—
  I only beg—to go ! . . .

IV

It may not be ! Prepare to die !
  I worship through the night.
The stars are sparkling in the sky :
  Oh, how they sparkle bright !
Not for ourselves, we pray for all !
  Good men, who pray with me,
Continue prayer—peace yet may fall—
  Oh, when, when shall it be ?"

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IV

AN EARTHQUAKE

EARTHQUAKES are sensations one does not go out of one's way to seek. I have been through two. Happily the worst convulsions of both of them were at a safe distance, though brick walls were cracked beside me. On both occasions the noise and trembling of the earth were indistinguishable from what may be felt in England when a heavy train goes by. In fact, I have felt what seemed to be worse shaking in a friend's house in Hyde Park Gardens when a London train was passing underground. No walls were cracked, however, in my friend's house. So the shaking must really have been less. It probably appeared to be worse because I was in a closed room and the glasses rattled on the table. But, less or more, it was exactly the same kind of thing.

When curious about what one has not seen or heard, one asks of other people, or reads their reports. So I have questioned minutely many an eye-witness of the shakings of Mother Earth, and

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read whatever came to hand, but never heard or read anything better than a poem which has a curious extrinsic interest from its date.

So here are two stanzas of it, one picturesque and one morally sublime. It is in the classical Chinese *Odes* (ii. 4, 9, 3 and 8: Legge's *Chinese Classics*, iv. pp. 321-325). The song incidentally mentions an eclipse, which has been verified for the date it gives (29th August 775 B.C.), "the earliest date in Chinese history about which there can be no dispute," says Legge. So the ballad, which is anonymous, and probably always was so, must have been composed after then, and long before 500 B.C., when it was already old and included by Confucius in his collection. It is taken from a set of Chinese Songs and Sayings, not yet published. It is printed in advance for the convenience of modern reporters, because several persons who have had first-hand experience of first-class earthquakes seem to agree that the anonymous ancient Chinese ballad-maker's description is still true to nature and cannot be surpassed.

I

How glorious the lightning flash!
The Earth is trembling sore.
The cliffs are crumbling with a crash;
The rivers bubble o'er.

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The river-beds rise into space ;
  The hills to glens descend.
Oh, how to find a steady place,
  Or make the movements end? . . .

II

The ways of Heaven are wonderful ;
  Its purpose none can say ;
And now stampeding is the rule,—
  The others run away
I know no more than others know ;
  But see my duty plain.
My post is here, I will not go,
  And here I will remain."

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V

SKY-CRACKERS

A FEW months after I came to the East I was sitting with some colonels no longer young in a tennis-court at Pegu, about May 1886, when suddenly "the cyclone burst" with a thunder-storm which made even veterans, as brave as men could be, show a certain disturbance in their manner. The same thing is told of Confucius, who was one of the bravest as well as one of the wisest of men. "On a sudden clap of thunder . . . he would change countenance," it is written (*Analects*, x. 16). The welkin was by turns ablaze and pitch dark, while the forked flashes were bewildering—sometimes jagged, like hatchet-cuts, oftener straight, like rapier thrusts, as if the demon of the lightning were playing around you to amuse himself before striking home.

As for the noise, it was as loud as it could be without ceasing to be audible. It was not so deafening as a burst of artillery, which sometimes cracks the drum of the ear, and to which I never

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went near without stuffing my ears. The Pegu thunder sounded little louder than the artillery has sounded through the stuffing. Yet it was far more impressive, one could not tell why. It reverberated among the clouds as if echoed back by Heaven. It was as loud as any thunder among the Alps, and seemed more musical than what is to be heard there. Perhaps the rocks make discords in the mountains. Pegu is on a plain.

This glorious celestial concert, which seemed in its harmony to surpass any orchestra as far as the sun surpasses any picture, and the fireworks that went with it had both been continuous for more than an hour when I was starting to ride away from my house that night to dine out; and on hearing that the rain was overdue and might begin at any moment, I gave my pony a kick, and off we went full gallop. The road was an avenue with various obstructions, and even an illumination equal to daylight could not let us see fifty yards ahead. Yet flash succeeded flash so quick that the pony never once put a hoof on unseen ground, and we went nearly a mile and reached our destination without ever slackening speed.

Mere talk about the weather was more interesting than usual that evening, and the storm vividly recalled, and seemed strangely to enable me to realize

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better, what I had been learning from Thomson (Kelvin) not long before. Unluckily my notes are not at hand, and though the substance of the meaning is his I must take full responsibility for errors, if there are any, and for the wording in all that follows.

The earth is a magnet, and the sun likewise, they say now. So a man can no more escape from electricity than from the air he breathes. Thomson would probably have approved of the suggestion that electricity was like gravitation. He was never weary of making us realize that it was *not* a fluid of any kind, or indeed a separate entity at all. So to talk of "its speed" was a questionable use of words; but it is comforting to feel that, when you see the flash, the cause of it has gone by. It is far quicker than thought. Before you have time to think, much less to say, "that's lightning," the stroke that made the flash you saw could go through and through the world. The flash, which is all you can see, is not the electricity, but only the trail it leaves behind, like the white foam and the surging waves that follow a steamer. "It" may be called a mode of motion, if that helps you; but what must never be forgotten is that "it" is essentially inconceivable. Do not let your names and phrases hide from you that "it" is a momentary glimpse vouchsafed you of the infinite living energy of the world. The

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more you know of it and the better you understand it, the clearer you will see this, even as the skilful astronomer can best realize the infinity of space.

It has been my fate to come as close as detailed reports and depositions can bring one to a score or two of "lightning accidents" in the last twenty-five years. Perhaps the best observed was one that happened about October 1891, on the Sittang River, between Pegu district and the district adjoining it on the east. I was a magistrate over there, and the tragedy came before me in the way of business.

The big river was still flushed by the rains then nearly ended. A "country boat" was sailing on it, the steersman perched as usual on the lofty poop. The sky was clouded; the "end of the rains," like the beginning, is a season for storms. Suddenly the steersman fell into the water and sank like a stone. A blinding flash seemed to stretch from the stern to the uppermost sky, and a great crashing sound filled every ear. The boat went drifting down the stream a while, till one of the awe-stricken survivors crept up to the vacant seat and took the tiller. Meanwhile the muddy waters beneath were swirling the corpse unseen towards the sea.

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VI

A HOT NIGHT IN MADRAS

IN 1910 this event is not yet twenty years old; but it has been told in many various ways. It was subsiding into the vague rumour that leads to oblivion when, this very year, I met a near relation of one who was close to it, and heard from him a version duly vouched for, and fit to be believed as one believes these things, that is to say, subject to correction, but without misgivings about the good faith of the speaker. He has read this record and now pronounces it correct. Names and some other superfluous details are omitted, but nothing is invented.

It happened one hot night in the Connemara Hotel, which is esteemed the best in Madras town; but neither there *nor* anywhere else in Madras could any European be comfortable that night. There is something about a hot night in the plains of India which makes one smile at the simplicity of the scribes at home, who are discussing whether the English "will stay" in

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India, as if that were an open question still. Except in graveyards we stay nowhere there. In search of health we nestle among the mountains, as Greenlanders in Europe might go to the Alps in summer. Upon the torrid plains the Englishman cannot permanently abide, and he has long ceased to try. He goes to and fro continually, like a man in fever, turning restlessly from side to side. Or he might be compared to Satan in Milton's Hell, who, sustained by self-conceit, walked with uneasy steps upon the burning marl.

Towards midnight he sometimes tries to sleep, as did the "Colonel Commanding," who is the hero of this history. He had come "to inspect" something in Madras—it might be a breach of confidence to say what. The man atop of what was to be inspected may, in place of a name, be called the "Corky Captain"; and he and his wife were living at the Connemara Hotel, to which the Colonel Commanding had also hurried on arrival. For some reason, perhaps because of dining out, they had not met, and never had met before. It was true that they "had not been introduced"; but there was nothing of social stiffness in that accident. They merely had not happened to meet. The best of friends among

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Anglo-Indians may serve in one province for years and never see each other; and men may do business together, intimate business of the kind demanding confidence—they may even serve in the same department for years and never see each other at all.

Electric fans were not in use then and there, and outside every bedroom that was occupied a coolie sat in the corridor, and pulled a rope that moved the big frame of the punkah, a long fan suspended from the bedroom ceiling and swinging as it was pulled over the bed. Like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, like cool water to a thirsty mouth, so was the moving punkah blessed as a breeze-bringer by anyone who happened to think about it. Those who did not think took it for granted, and were apt to lose their tempers when it stopped.

Indeed it is hard to be patient then, for the moving punkah is the European's only hope of sleep on a hot night, and when it pauses he is apt to awake perspiring and choking. During the last quarter of a century I cannot recollect any year when I did not hear or read of assaults on punkah coolies, sometimes causing death and ending in a police-court. Patience is easier to preach than to practise. Point to a heavy boot

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put handy to be flung and say, "That is more likely to kill than not; you'll be hanged if you fling that and kill;" the answer may be, "What a relief it will be to be choked once for all!"

Under such conditions the Colonel Commanding fell asleep, and awaked with the feeling that he was already in hell. When he looked around him, and above, he saw it was only the punkah that had stopped. He went and cuffed his coolie, returned to bed, and fell asleep again.

Once more he awoke in the same way and went outside to do his duty; but this time the coolie did not stay to be cuffed. He was not caught napping. He had run away.

Every man has to manage his own coolies. The hotel office could not help the Colonel Commanding thus suddenly deserted. The best thing he could see to do was to go along the corridor and persuade the man pulling the next punkah to go in search of the deserter.

"But what about the lady and gentleman in this room?" asked that other coolie.

"Go you for my man, quick, and I'll pull your rope till you come back," said the Colonel Commanding; for he was in a hole, and saw no other way out. So the man was persuaded and went to seek the runaway; and the Colonel

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Commanding sat in his place, pulling the rope that moved the punkah that fanned the Corky Captain and his wife. But the Colonel neither knew nor cared who they were, nor indeed did he long know or care for anything at all.

It is sleepy work to pull a punkah rope. The pendulous swing of it is like a rocking-cradle lullaby. The exercise is just enough to keep the blood agoing rightly, not congested anywhere. It is not to be supposed that the Colonel Commanding, just aroused from sleep and hungering to sleep soon again, was fighting against drowsiness. Rather would he cherish it, hoping to sleep the quicker when back in bed. The last thing likely to present itself as a possibility to his mind was that he might fall asleep on that uncomfortable sitting-place—"a little box like a stool," it is said—in that stifling corridor. He would have jeered at the mention of such a thing in a novel. Yet that was exactly what happened.

Let the fact be noted by the medical faculty for the benefit of suffering humanity. Many of the greatest of human discoveries, perhaps the most of them, have been made, as this was, accidentally. From what I hear from the skilful doctor, who is the living authority for this history, the sleep-producing effect of punkah-pulling seems

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a real addition to medical knowledge. He has prescribed it with success, and assures me that a healthy man, broad awake, can make himself drowsy in about ten minutes by steadily pulling a punkah, under suitable conditions of silence and so on. Wherefore let doctors remember this experience of the Colonel Commanding.

The Colonel himself will remember it, without an effort, as long as he lives. The immediate effect of his sleep was like Hamlet's interview with his father's ghost, altogether unforgettable. Mrs. Corky Captain opened her eyes and saw that the punkah that had been fanning her and her spouse was still, and, knowing what men are, she got up hastily, probably praying that her husband would sleep on. (For in fact, if not in fiction, there are some wifely wives in India.) Then, bethinking herself how to waken the coolie well and noiselessly, and keep him effectually awake a while, she took in her hand the pitcher full of water, and stepped into the corridor, meaning to baptize him.

In this there was no cruelty on a hot night in Madras. I know a kind person who has told me he often did it. The water wakens a man pleasantly, and soon, too soon, evaporates away. The man so wakened would smile and be happy, or scowl and be wretched, according as the

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baptizer smiled on him or scowled, for face answers face among humanity across all the chasms of caste and race.

Whether Mrs. Corky Captain would have smiled or scowled she probably had not decided in advance, and nobody can ever tell. It was upon the Colonel Commanding that she poured the water; and when, in the dim light, she saw a white man in pyjamas spring to his feet, she screamed and dropped the pitcher, which broke noisily upon the floor.

Up sprang the Corky Captain, and out he stepped into the corridor, with a loaded revolver in his hand and his finger on the trigger.

The men glared at each other. For a few tense seconds there was a stillness that could be felt. The listener held her breath.

A faint clinking sound coming from below seemed somehow irrelevant, like the ticking of a senseless clock, breaking a solemn hush. It seemed irrelevant; but, at last, one man said to the other, "I think the bar is open. Come downstairs and have a drink." An "explanation" was demanded first. It was given, and then they went, and that is the end of the story. Nothing happened.

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VII

STOLEN GOODS

1. A BUSINESS-LIKE BRITISH OFFICER

ONE of the most respectable doctors in England once told me, apropos of Pekin in 1900 and the plundering and other horrors there, which were as bad as the worst excesses of the Barbarians in the old Roman empire, a curious incident, well worth record.

Pekin had been as "glorious a city to sack" as London would be; and the day after the battle, so to speak, a British officer noticed how cheap the looting had made furs of every kind. Never, and nowhere in the world before, were the best of furs so plentiful and cheap. So he invested all the cash he could get on furs, and packed them in trunks with the needful preservatives.

It seemed dangerous to send them away at once, for France was returning stolen goods in a way that made the buyers of furs at prices fancifully small a little uneasy. But a good chance

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came at last, and a steamer carried home the precious boxes; and either Thomas Cook, or somebody equally respectable, delivered them to the officer's wife.

So complete had his precautions been that he included other things to mislead the Customs people, if they were in search of stolen furs, and he told his wife no more than that furs were coming.

They came—furs that could have been sold by auction in London for several thousand pounds; but the officer's wife, as she joyfully examined the contents of the boxes, saw nothing in the furs except a foolish husband's bad bargaining and a great deal of future bother to herself in utilizing them. A jumble sale was impending in her church, and she sent nearly the whole lot to it. Then gradually, in the course of many weeks, the purchasers who had attended that jumble sale discovered what miraculous bargains they had received, and the mandarins' sables could be seen here and there on the cloaks of the poor.

Vain now is repentance, if indeed, which is matter of opinion, there was need for repentance. The deed cannot be undone. For good or evil these stolen furs are as irrecoverable as water spilt upon the thirsty desert sands. But happily there are things that can be traced.

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2. THE GERMANS AS CLUMSY THIEVES

A "GREAT bronze globe" was stolen by the Germans at Pekin about 1900, according to the newspapers, and is now permanently on parade, it is reported, at Berlin, as if it were a trophy and not vulgar loot. Not long ago a Chinaman was asked whether his countrymen would ever try to recover it. "No," said he, "we will get others. Let them keep it—for their shame."

It is a curious coincidence, illuminating a difference between East and West, that about the same time (1907) a Berlin newspaper correspondent was writing that the Germans would like to give back the loot taken from China, or, at least, whatever of it could be traced, but were withheld by the fear of "spoiling their face." In other words, they keep it to *hide* their shame.

The situation begins to savour of Don Quixote, and the statesmen of Germany to appear like burglars who have been watched but are not aware of it. True it is that the mortal sin of sins in worldly life is to be detected; but, when detected and only not punished or punishable, then openly—

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. . . "to persist
In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,
But makes it much more heavy."

So the Chinese are right; and the retention of the stolen astronomical instruments, and the globe in particular, is a lasting shame to Germany, a daily repeated offence. People may go on speaking of it for centuries, or millenniums to come, so that in some future thousand of our era the only thing known about the Germans in China may be that they sent men to steal furniture there.

The Chinese say the Japs were cleverer, and looted the public treasury and the houses of the rich. The American General Chaffey, like another Oliver Cromwell or Gustavus Adolphus, threatened to shoot any of his men who plundered, and his men kept out of the houses accordingly; but that only gave the Cossacks and Sepoys more elbow-room. The Germans were late, and nothing was left for them to loot but furniture; and so, like the last and most palpable of a series of thieves, they are caught and made to suffer for the sins of others as well as for their own.

Frankly, I do not like it. A man likes it the less, the better he likes the Germans.

"We'll give back Kiau Chau as well, when you give back Cyprus and Egypt and give India Home Rule," a German has retorted with force.

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It is easier for us to see the faults of others than our own. But, after all, two blacks do not make a white; and this is not written to blame the Germans, but to let them know that they are being watched. It is for their sake that that "great bronze globe" annoys me. Gentlemen do not steal like that; and one cannot plead kleptomania for an empire. So let Germany "save her face" by restitution.

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VIII

THE CONVERTED DACOIT

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1. PRELIMINARY

THE only merit claimed for the following narrative is that it is true. This does not mean merely "founded on truth," but true in every detail. It is a statement of actual facts, and was written down as they occurred. Reality is often more amusing and pathetic and altogether more interesting than any fiction. At any rate, the facts can always bear reflection, and are some addition to our knowledge. Take this story, for instance. At first glance it may appear no better than a newspaper's "queer story," or the yarn of a fictioneer. But the circumstance that the details are true seems to me to make it a hundred times more valuable. It does not lose its value as time goes by. The opinions incidentally disclosed by the writer may be all foolish; but the facts remain to interest us.

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2. THATON AND ITS CREEDS

THATON is a little town close to the coast of Lower Burma and about forty miles north of Moulmein. It was there that the Indian missionaries of Buddhism landed about fifteen hundred years ago or more, and from Thaton the placid religion of Buddha spread over Burma. That it came in over the northern mountains too is likely; but about the coming to Thaton there is no doubt at all. It is a curious creed. Much of it is adoration of the divine hero, Gautama, commonly called the Buddha, and to him, through many changes in all other things, the Burmans and Shans and all the superior races in Burma have been faithful for many centuries.

The European traders, who in the end conquered Burma that they might trade in peace, brought two "militant" or meddlesome religions with them — Mohammedanism and Christianity. They brought Hinduism too, but it blended easily with Buddhism — it is the most tolerant religion in the world. The mild Hindu in Burma accepted the Buddha as a god, without any questions, as readily as London Society admits a millionaire.

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Mohammedans and Christians were more captious. Many persons in Europe and America still subsidize missionaries to preach Jesus Christ in a variety of ways. There are Christian missionaries to suit every taste. There are others more like the St. Paul of tradition, who sewed tents for a livelihood. These are mullahs, often self-supporting, whose hook noses and narrow faces are probably not unlike St. Paul's. There is no disrespect in this comparison. St. Paul himself cannot have been more "terribly in earnest" than a mullah known to the writer. He was an Arab from the Persian Gulf, come to preach "the only true God, and the road to heaven." His fingers trembled with awe, and his voice was involuntarily hushed as he pointed once to the Arabic text in his big polyglot Koran, saying, "These are the very words of God." Another has been known to beg most seriously from an official person advice as to the possibility of obtaining leave to discuss the truth of his religion with the Empress, Queen Victoria. That he could convert her if she would listen to him he had no doubt whatever. "Why else did God put it into her heart to learn Hindustani? As for her not being persuaded, was she not wise enough to know the truth if she heard it?" To get speech with her was the

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only difficulty, in his opinion. Such are the men who may occasionally be found in the bazaars or elsewhere, at fairs, or even at funerals, wherever men gather, preaching the "One God, whose prophet is Mohammed," and denouncing the blasphemous folly of Christians and all other idolaters.

Differing in other things, Mohammedans and Christians agree in scoffing at Buddhism, and talk of converting Buddhists; but it is little else than talk. The truth of the matter was well put by an Indian once, in Thaton, at a three-cornered public debate between Buddhists, Mohammedans and Christians. "I spread the truth better than you, Syed Ahmed," said he, addressing the ingenious and persuasive champion of his own creed. "You've never converted a Burman yet; and see, my three Burmese wives have borne me a dozen children." "All your own?" asked some one in the crowd. "All devout Mohammedans," said he, finishing his intended speech; and then, diverging in Oriental fashion to other topics, he discussed with great eloquence the frailties of the female relations of those who had interrupted him.

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3. THE SUDDEN CALL

IN 1889 Christianity was represented in Thaton by two American missionary ladies, Mrs. Kelley and Miss Lawrence, with a native pastor and a small flock. At intervals the ladies went touring among the villages. On the morning of Wednesday, July 3rd, of that year, they happened to be at home in Thaton, and were about to breakfast, when a caller of unusual sort was announced and admitted.

For "I fear to say how long," as Mrs. Kelley would afterwards express it, he charmed their ears with talk which made them quite forget that breakfast was growing cool. He was a Burman, and described himself as an "anxious seeker after truth." He greatly wished to "know immediately all about the eternal God," and to be baptized and allowed to join the native Christians. Mrs. Kelley forgot everything else while she spoke to him.

The new-comer was allowed to join in family worship. He sang the morning hymn lustily, and as musically as could be expected of a man who had never heard such music before. His deference to a native Christian preacher, who spent

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much time that day in instructing him, was charming; and, being a stranger, he was hospitably entertained for five or six days. He said he wished to settle there for ever, and spoke in a touching manner of the sweet prospect of heaven.

4. A SIGN FROM HEAVEN

GOOD grey-haired Mrs. Kelley! Her heart was uplifted beyond hope. For many years, since her husband and all her children died, she had persevered in the "mission to Burmans and Shans," in which her husband had found a career and an accidental early death. It was hard to be separated from her old mother still alive in America; but to go on with this mission seemed a duty. For her to see a duty was to do it. So she had persevered ploughing the sands, year after year, stifling all misgivings till lately.

Her mother was very old and far from well. Should she go home to nurse her? One night she explained this matter to the young Scotsman who was Assistant Commissioner (magistrate and much else) at Thaton. She had come to see, she said, that the highest duty was to remain at the

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Lord's work. Her Christian friends mostly thought so. He was a friend and admirer of the good old lady, but avowedly not a Christian. Yet somehow she was anxious for his opinion also on this topic, and after he had long parried the question he at last answered it.

"Go home and nurse your mother." She found it difficult to make him say more, but in that also she at last succeeded.

Most missionaries in Burma work among the Karens. Miss Lawrence did so. Now the Karens are like the Burmans and a kind of Mongolians, but till the Europeans came to Burma they lived altogether in remote glens, despised by the Burmans, and speaking a different language. They had no religion except such fear of ghosts and spirits as all peoples seem to have. So it was that many of them adopted Christianity gladly.

Mrs. Kelley felt that her mission to races that were Buddhists was a totally different thing. The preaching of Christ to only Karens in Burma was as if Mohammedan missionaries going to preach the gospel according to Mohammed among the heathen of the United States were to confine their labours to the Red Indians and Negroes. The very success obtained among the

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despised tribes tended to prevent success among the predominant part of the people. With womanly tenacity Mrs. Kelley clung to the hope of making Burmans abjure the Buddha and worship the Christ. The other missionaries might think what they liked. The Lord would help her. It was the Lord's work.

But now she felt herself "torn two ways at once"; and for help to see her way she wished to know whether the Assistant Commissioner, looking at her work for the moment from the Christian point of view, would say it was showing signs of taking root. Was it likely, if she went away, that the few nominally Christian Shans would adhere to the faith and spread it, and be joined by other Buddhists eager to come from darkness into light?

"No," had to be the reply; "that is not likely."

"Do you mean," she asked, "that they'll fall off into heathenism whenever I go away?"

"No. One or two may; but most of them will do more and more as they are doing already, drift towards the Karens and mix with them, their common faith being the bond of union."

He referred to the opinions and experiences of others, to convince her it was no fault of hers that she had so little success. There was nothing to

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be done that the other missionaries could not do—nothing to keep her. To go to her mother seemed a clear duty. Her own health was failing—another indication of where her duty lay. For nearly a year past he had been advising her to go home for that reason alone.

She tried to persuade him he was mistaken, but visibly was herself half convinced of the contrary. She had recourse to prayer. Unconsciously, quite unconsciously, she wanted a "sign," and this Burman seeker after truth, coming not for medical treatment but for his soul's salvation, oppressed by the feeling of sin, was a novelty in her experience. He seemed to be specially sent in answer to her prayers to end all dubiety. Her life's labour was bearing fruit at last! Behold,—a converted Buddhist!!!

5. WELCOME BUT REPELLENT

SHE was a skilful surgeon, and more esteemed as a physician than the Government doctor at Thaton; and so she had visitors enough, who in return for gratuitous medical treatment would tolerate a little theology. But this man was so different, so modest and unobtrusive! He had a

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wound on his hand, a "trifling accidental cut," he explained, and he was much distressed when she wanted to treat it. "Don't think of it, don't speak of it," he said with unfeigned earnestness. "There's something very genuine about him," thought Mrs. Kelley.

Strange to tell, "and it just shows how little our judgment influences our feelings," she would say afterwards, "I thought I ought to like him and tried to, but I could not. There was in his face something unpleasant and even forbidding."

6. VERIFICATION

ONE thing seemed clear, that it would be well to verify what he said of his antecedents. The native Christians scarcely thought so. They were few, and a simple folk. To Mrs. Kelley, however, the extraordinary importance of this conversion, "if only it were true," made uncertainty intolerable. The native pastor would go to where he came from. Alas! When he heard that, he modified his story.

The native pastor did not need to go so far. On the morning of Tuesday, July 9, he went to the house of the Thaton Myoök (or township

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magistrate) and told him about the stranger and the things he had said, and the strange scar on his hand. The Myoŏk and the preacher went to the Assistant Commissioner's house, and to it the suspicious stranger was presently invited. He came readily, when he found it was impossible to run away, as the men who invited him were armed, and surrounded him.

He stood passive a little, while the detectives who had been summoned examined the marks on his person, and the two magistrates compared them with "hue and cry" sheets. He soon perceived it was useless to deny his identity. "Yes, I am Maung Paygyi,"[1] he said, smiling to the Assistant Commissioner. The native Christians who had come after him shrank away, almost shuddering when they heard this, for "Maung Paygyi" was a "dacoit," one of a robber gang, and was wanted in the neighbouring district of Shwegyin[2] for robbery and murder.

"That's the worst against him," said one magistrate to the other. "We must send him there at once for trial." Men were sent to arrange an escort, and Mg. Paygyi, seating himself comfortably on a mat, addresssd the Assistant

[1] Pronounced Payjee. "Maung," written Mg., corresponds to our Mr.

[2] Pronounced Shwejeen.

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Commissioner, saying, "I'd like you to dispose of the case." Receiving no reply but a shake of the head, he spoke again. "At least you'll hear me. I'll tell you all the truth. I'd like to." He was told it would be written down. "Exactly what I want," said he. "Write it all. I've nothing to be ashamed of. I wish the truth to be written down."

7. CONFESSION

WRITING materials were brought and he made a long confession, extenuating his own share in the latest exploit.

"You must know," he remarked, pleasantly nodding his head, "I am myself an industrious, honest man, but I was led astray a little by bad company. It was all the fault of Tha Maung of our village—a lazy blackguard and thief and opium-eater. He was short of opium, and came to me and said, 'Paygyi,' said he, 'I have no opium. I must get some. What am I to do?'

"I said, 'Work as I do, like an honest man,' but he didn't.

"He came one morning with two other fellows from the next village. I was on the top of my

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house at the time, busy working at my roof. He said to me, 'We're going to do a dacoity. Will you come?' I only answered, 'Don't tempt a poor, honest, hard-working man,' and they went away; but as they went one turned and said, 'You come to my house this afternoon with Tha Maung.'

"Now, I didn't mean to go; but in the afternoon Tha Maung called me and I went. When I heard them there discussing the intended dacoity, I said, 'I daren't go.' But Tha Maung said, 'You're poor. Come along,' and so I went.

"Each of the other three had a sword, but I had none. I had not even a stick. About eight in the evening we came to the house we meant to attack. It was a dark night and raining heavily. Tha Maung and I went into the house first. The other two followed. All I did was just to go to the fireplace and there light my cheroot. Tha Maung and the other two seized the man that lived in the house and stabbed him so that he died at once. The man's wife screamed 'Murder, murder!' I ran away and saw no more."

"But," asked the magistrate after all this had been taken down, "what about the scar on your hand?"

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"Oh," said he, laughing, "I'll tell you how I got that. You see, when the murdered man and my three mates were fighting, Tha Maung called out to me to help, and I didn't, but stood by. So when they had finished the man, Tha Maung turned upon me, swearing, and struck at me with his sword. He aimed at my head, but I caught the blow on my hand."

The reader, of course, can easily guess the truth that this laughing, lying scoundrel had been a ringleader. The scar on his hand was the result of a wound received in the fight with the man they murdered. But he was far from suspecting any one thought so. He thought his story was believed, because it was written down so minutely. He particularly begged that the fact should be noted, that he had been a Christian for nearly a week. As it was all read over to him he repeatedly nodded approval, and beamed with satisfaction as he put his mark to the end of the record.

8. DOUBLE HANDCUFFS

BEFORE and after the recording of his candid confession he carried on an animated and friendly chat with the magistrate. "Do you drink?" asked the latter, glancing towards a side

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table whereon stood bottles. With a suddenly earnest look he answered, "I? No! I never drank alcohol in my life, and I never will." "Nor ate opium either," added he, after a pause. More than once he spoke of the evils of bad company, and shook his head as he abused his companions. "I hear," he said, "all three of them are caught, and I'll be jolly glad to be a witness against the blackguards." He lost his equanimity for a moment when, his long and pleasant interview with the Assistant Commissioner being about over, two stalwart Sikh policemen came upstairs and proceeded to put on double handcuffs. "There's no need for this," he cried, with an appealing look. "I won't run. I won't run. I assure you I won't. *You might surely trust to my word of honour, and at most one pair of handcuffs!*"

He soon recovered his good humour. As he was about to be led away he suddenly took a handkerchief from his girdle, and untying it counted out on the floor one rupee, and in coppers thirty-one pice (about two shillings or half a dollar).

"Look here," said he to the Assistant Commissioner, "by this you may know for yourself how hard-working and honest I am. Rather than

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be idle in Thaton I sawed a lot of wood for the mission, and Miss Lawrence made me take three rupees, saying it was the least she could give me. I have spent some for food, but have this much left. I wish you to tell the police I may keep it to buy a few comforts, cheroots and such things, on the way to Shwegyin." That was done. He then begged that a messenger might be sent to the hut he had lived in, to fetch his blankets and a change of clothing; and that also having been done, he was led away, laughing and joking with the policemen.

Before he had been gone very long a native Christian came to say Miss Lawrence had advanced Mg. Paygyi three rupees for some work which he had *not* done, and she would like to know whether it could not be got back; but the poor, hard-working honest man was then too far away on the road to Shwegyin.

9. THE SEQUELS

POSTSCRIPT.—It remains to be added that Rs. 100 (then worth about £7 or 35 dollars), the reward offered for Mg. Paygyi's arrest, was duly paid to the Thaton Christians, and that he

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himself was tried before the Court of Sessions at Shwegyin, convicted of murder, and sentenced along with one of his comrades to be "hanged by the neck till he was dead." Yet it was only the other man after all that was hanged. Mg. Paygyi's sentence was commuted by the compassionate Judicial Commissioner to transportation for life. The Judicial Commissioner said this was done because the other man apparently dealt the fatal blow, but Mg. Paygyi doubtless believed it was because he had been able to speak for himself so well, and had said, like the good Sir John Falstaff, "Company, villanous company, hath been the spoil of me." When last heard of, Maung Paygyi had attained an honourable position in convict "society" in the Andaman Islands.

Finding Mrs. Kelley much depressed by her disappointment, the Assistant Commissioner wrote out what had happened in narrative shape, to show her the humorous side of the matter. She laughed heartily at last. "I had no idea it was so funny, and it is all true, too," she said, confidentially adding, some weeks later, "There's no way of getting rid of worries so good as laughing at them if you can. I thought this thing would wring my heart at first, and now I cannot help smiling as often as I think of Mg. Paygyi."

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What tickled her most was the recollection of Paygyi's singing. Even when she had taken him seriously, she had found it hard not to laugh at his preoccupied cast-iron looks as he "sang." "A howling dog would have been harmony compared to him." Yet, what to do? Was he not in trouble about his immortal soul, and a most welcome and wonderful phenomenon? One could not laugh while thinking so; but it was hard to hold in.

Another thing was the irony of fate in the circumstances that led to his arrest. Never before had it occurred to anyone connected with Christian missions there to send a preacher a long journey to verify a convert's story. Mg. Paygyi had laid his plans well. There was a happy combination of cunning and audacity in hiding himself at the headquarters of the Sub-division, where no one would be looking for him. But for Mrs. Kelley's anxiety for a sign to show the Lord's will, Mg. Paygyi would have been safe, for no other Christian there would have doubted him. "There was a finger of Providence in it after all," she would maintain, "but not quite what I expected." "You must let me have it printed," she concluded, and retained the MS.

She did then decide to go home to her mother,

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but she had delayed too long. She died in Moulmein a few months later, and the MS. returned to its first owner; and now, unaltered in all essentials, it is printed after more than a dozen years.

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IX

A CHARM THAT FAILED

1. THE GREAT CONSPIRACY

IN 1889, at Thaton in Burma, near Moulmein, I had to deal suddenly with a small matter that might have caused a lot of mischief.

Many of the richest villages, on the rice plains between the sea and the mountains there, had been looted in 1888 by a gang of brigands, who took advantage of the disturbances that followed the war, and found shelter in the woods to the east. There were hamlets of Karens (or Burmese Highlanders) among the woods, and in these hamlets the brigands, themselves Karens, found every element of happiness :—food of the kinds they liked, unlimited alcohol, beautiful brides (they took their choice, but, to do them justice, they were faithful husbands), smuggled opium and dealers to buy their plunder. Tobacco was so much a matter of course that it need not be mentioned. One of the Western afflictions yet spared to the East is a tax on tobacco.

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Altogether the brigands had rather a good time for a few months, till they were all scattered and mostly killed. But the tribulations of the other Karens were terrible indeed. The brigand "bo," or, as we say, "boss," was as jealous in exacting deference as any Jack-in-office, "dressed in a little brief authority." In one village they seized a respectable old man who had innocently given offence, and, "by order of the bo," standing by, they tied rags tightly round him, douched him with kerosene, set fire to him and roasted him to death.

So it was natural that, when the last of them was dead or gone over the hills and far away, the Karens on the east of the mountains were as thankful as the farmers on the west, and the opinion was general that brigandage did not pay. The young men, however, held different sentiments, and were far from the common clearness of conviction as to the ultimate balance of profit and loss. Thus it happened that in 1889 some credible and judicious old Karens came and told me in secret that they and their neighbours were greatly alarmed by the doings of a tattooer from Upper Burma or the Shan States, who was making their young men think themselves invulnerable.

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"For a consideration," trifling if you believed in its virtue, he was affixing a wonderful red mark to the middle of the forehead, a little above the line of the eyebrows. It looked like a Maltese cross, and covered about the space of half an inch in every direction. It had two great properties. One was like that of the Gorgon's head, the sight of which was enough to kill. The sight of the charm was to paralyse the enemy's arm, and that was why it had to be conspicuous. But as modern fighting is seldom at close quarters, except by night, and even wizards must be up-to-date, the charm had the further fine quality of rendering the skin invulnerable. Does not that make it useful at all times? So the critical elders were asked. It keeps one safe in working. Snakes would become as harmless as frogs, and even tigers and crocodiles would not twice break their teeth upon a man so fortified. Neither steel nor bullet, neither claws nor fangs, nothing could touch them further.

It really was unlikely, as the old men told me, that the dry weather would be allowed to pass unused by about a hundred needy and idle young Karens, clad in this imaginary impenetrable armour, with das (big knives like swords) in every hand, and many rich villages within a morning's walk.

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Already they were swearing fidelity to each other, drinking each other's blood and pledging themselves by oaths worthy of the heroes of Stevenson's romances; while whispers were circulating of a hundred thousand rupees to be got in such a house, and fifty thousand in another, when suddenly —a first batch of tattooed warriors was arrested and brought before me for trial.

2. AN ISSUE UNFORESEEN

ONE of the undeniable drawbacks of a charm on your forehead is that it is hard to hide. So a panic spread among the customers of the tattooing magician, who disappeared in a hurry and was seen no more. When the first lot of his dupes was brought to court, the building was crowded by their relatives and those of men similarly situated; and the air was filled with that suppressed excitement which is likened to human electricity.

Number One was, and said he was, fifteen years of age. Now, in Burma and India a boy under sixteen can be sentenced to flogging in lieu of imprisonment, and these Karens had a horror of the jail, because they were apt to sicken and die

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in it, whereas the Burmans and Indians throve in it and grew fat. So, as soon as Number One said he was only fifteen and merely asked for mercy, I said he would not go to jail but be sentenced to twenty stripes, and the flogging would stop as soon as blood was drawn, for then he would know that the charm was broken.

There was an audible gasp of relief and a hurried whispering. Women had to be held back to keep them from rushing to tell relatives in the dock to say they were "only fifteen." But no hint was needed. The rustic Burman or Karen is as truthful as any man, but terror had seized them. I once knew a Karen who committed suicide to avoid jail. On this occasion, "I am fifteen *only*" was the chorus of them all. In their excitement none waited to be asked. Even a tall fellow with a moustache was crouching to look small, and crying, "I am fifteen only."

"If the elders can answer for your behaviour I will treat you all as boys of fifteen," I said. Then weren't they deferential to the elders? I gave them as much time as they wanted to talk among themselves, and in the end the elders, having first exacted many promises, said they would answer for them all; and so no sentences of imprisonment were passed, but only floggings.

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An order was issued at the same time to other villages that, if everybody agreed and the elders wished it, they might themselves dispose of the tattooed warriors summarily, provided they duly broke the charms by a solution of the skin's continuity by means of the cane. The message was received with acclamation, and it may be said at once that all over the Karen countryside that week there was a volunteer flagellation worthy of the Middle Ages. Nobody needed to be brought to court.

As for the first lot, the earnestness of everybody at the trial was as great as if it had been a case of murder; but I did not go downstairs to see the flogging, which was done in front of the court-house. I heard enough. I could not have kept my countenance. I never heard more laughing in my life. For nearly an hour there was a succession of peals, loud, long and unrestricted, like the laughing of the gods in Homer, heartier than anything I ever heard in England. When I peeped out after a while from a side window, I saw that not only the yard of the court, but also the roads adjoining and the houses opposite, were a living mass of people. And no wonder they laughed. Where or when in all the world before was such a thing known as a man being flogged

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on a public triangle or whipping-post and turning round on the man with the cane at every blow and *abusing him in the finest vernacular for not laying it on hard enough?* My order was to draw *blood* and then stop at once. If blood came at the first stroke, the flogging was ended. The succession of scenes can be imagined, and the minute inspections by dozens of men after every blow to see if blood was coming yet. Then many voices would be raised to advise the executioner where next to hit, and how; and all the time the man on the triangle, who had earnest convictions of his own on the subject, was frantically trying to raise his voice above the rest. And at every lull there were volleys of chaff about the tattooing. "Ah, the charm is working!" was the cry, when the blood failed to come.

What baffled everybody, including the police, was to know who had told me. If the truth had been known, the harmony that came upon the Karens would have been rudely broken; but nobody ever knew, and everybody was happy ever after.

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X

THE MIRACULOUS MILK

1. PRELUDE

IN telling this story I face a dilemma, or at least a divided duty. To betray a trust is unthinkable; and yet without doing so I cannot indulge the reader with the full amplitude of details that most people like. It would be easy to please everybody, if I chose to claim the privileges of the fictioneer; but I agree with Dr. Johnson that, "if a story is false, it is a picture of nothing." So I dare not fill in the blanks with imaginary details; and if I give names and dates, as one does in the witness-box, there is an old gentleman enjoying the evening of life in London who would indulge in strong language to *me* at any rate, and perhaps, which would be almost worse, to other people.

It is not easy to please everybody, but it is worth while to try. "Who does the utmost that he can, sometimes does—more," as the poet says, with the poet's privilege of paradox. That same

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old gentleman, before he was old, in 1887, *gave me leave to tell the story.* He cannot deny *that.* I have accordingly told it at intervals (to different people) for over twenty years, and they enjoyed it so much that it seems a pity to let it be lost if printing it can save it. What is printing it but telling it to a bigger crowd? Besides, I shall not give names, or a single superfluous detail; and for the sake of brevity and other reasons I shall omit expletives, so that nobody can ever know, and only a yearly diminishing number can guess, the hero's name.

2. ON THE GROUND

IT was about thirty years ago, and the scene was a river-side village in Lower Burma, where there was a native magistrate's court. Our hero was big and fat, twenty stone weight of Celtic humanity at least, for hardly a pony in the country could bear him. He was the "official superior" of the native magistrate; and, like the Black Prince in Froissart's *Chronicles*, like a spoiled baby, one might add, he "was of a high and overbearing spirit . . . . and willed that, right or wrong, every lord who was under his command should be dependent on him." On this occasion

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he had come with two other officers to do inspection and hunting. The inspection did not take long, and their quarters were uncomfortable; but discomforts were sanctified in their eyes by what remained in prospect—the most superlative of sports, the slaughter of venison.

3. THE RÉVEILLÉ

"NEARLY five o'clock! Wake up, you sinners!"

"Wake? Do you think that anyone could sleep while you were snoring?"

As they huddled on their clothes there were many shouts for coffee, among other things, and presently strong language at the mist arising from the river and creeping over the selected hunting ground.

"No use to start till that is lifted a little. We may as well make up our minds to stay here till seven." So said one of the three, who was a forest officer and knew the place best.

Our hero groaned. He cast one longing, lingering look upon his bed and said, "I wish you had told me. I couldn't sleep now if I tried."

"We'll have plenty of time to enjoy our coffee,"

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said the other, adroitly, and shouts arose—"Boy, toast!" Incredible as it may appear, they had been about to partake of untoasted bread for the same reason as the Jews allege for bread unleavened—to save time. To such privations can a real amateur hunter expose himself for the sake of sport. But when the mist held them in privations were not needed, and the shout was repeated more than once—"Toast! toast! toast!"

4. MILK! MILK! MILK!

THE toast was brought; but there was a worried look upon the servant's face that made the three men simultaneously survey the table. Then the terrible truth dawned upon them—there was no milk!

"Need to dispense with milk," said the forest officer, as cheerily as he could.

"No help for it," said the third man, adding, "we can't blame anybody. We meant to be off at five."

"Call the magistrate," shouted our hero in trumpet tones. By the time the Burman magistrate arrived, it was nearly six o'clock and broad daylight, and our hero was shaking the wooden building as he strode up and down in the small

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room, looking like an elephant in a stable. Few words were spoken. Very few were needed. For centuries the Burmans have lived under rulers who considered the slightest disrespect to a man in authority a capital offence, punishable without trial. It used to be like that in France. It is so in Russia at this hour, and our dear Captain von Koepenick has shown how much it is so in Germany. It was so in England too, once upon a time, in the days of King Lear, and occasionally later.

"Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?" asked King Lear. "Ay, sir." "And the creature run from the cur?" he went on. "There thou mightst behold the great image of authority: *a dog's obeyed in office.*"

The Burman gentleman stayed only long enough to learn what was wanted, and then bowed his face to the floor, as they used to do, and with a hurried ejaculation like a man-of-war's-man's "Ay, ay, sir," departed with more than Oriental agility in search of milk. But you cannot find what does not exist. There was no milk in the place, nor within twenty miles of it, neither cow's milk nor buffalo's milk, nor goat's milk nor tinned milk, no kind of milk. In vain were messengers sent running to the Burman magistrate to "hurry

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up" the search, as if the court-house had been on fire. After many prefatory messages to deprecate the wrath of the man in authority, the Burman magistrate returned in person, accompanied by the local inspector of police, and as many of "the elders" as could be persuaded to come; and with circumlocutions enough, as they all put their faces to the floor, they explained the nakedness of the country and the total lack of milk.

5. INSUBORDINATION

OUR hero knew what to think of that. It was downright insubordination. "I must have milk!" he cried. The other officers tried to placate him, but were bidden "shut up." He knew what to do. He would let them see. He demanded particulars of the inhabitants of the village, names and ages of all, in a tone and manner that made everybody shudder; and while the other unhappy brown men were speculating what fate was in store for them, whether heads would come off or the village be merely burned, one old man stood up with the courage of desperation and cried, "My lord, have mercy! I am a doctor, and know what these poor people have not thought about, or forgotten. Spare us half an

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hour, and give me the tumbler, and I'll fetch it full of milk."

"He's mad," said the forest officer. "It's true there's no milk to be got." The other Burmans looked askance at him also; but he persisted, saying, in tones of supplication, "All I ask, O lord and master, great protector of the poor, is that I be for ever shielded against these foolish persons who have failed where I will succeed, and let me be covered with the might of your highness's power and glory!"

That is the sort of language which is music to the ears of fools, and the great man was pleased and smiled upon the speaker, and pointed to the tumbler which the servant hastened to put in the old man's hand. He hurried away with it.

6. THE AGONY OF SUSPENSE

THE others made to follow. "Wait," thundered our hero. "Wait till he fetches the milk!" A moan went up from the villagers outside, who had followed them and were listening; and the old man, returning into the village, was preceded by the awful rumour that unless he brought the milk within half an hour, an unspeak-

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able fate awaited them all. Some old women began to rock themselves and sob, and children began to cry.

Meanwhile, after ordering fresh coffee, to show how confident he was that milk would now be forthcoming, our hero explained to his two companions, who rather looked than spoke their remonstrances, how much better than they he knew the art of ruling, which it appeared was an Irish speciality, as little understood in England as the steam engine was in China fifty years ago. He was more emphatic than coherent, and ejaculated various violent maxims that were confused enough to seem profound, like a would-be Zarathustra. Then he dropped into other plainer expressions of the "knock them down" style, that sound so strange to English ears, but were then at any rate familiar enough to those of the Burmans who could remember native rulers. Nothing could have been more amusing than his stupid seriousness in thinking club rule a new discovery. It is as old as humanity, and familiar to the lowest savages. It is a thing within the meanest capacity. As Cavour said, "Anybody can govern by a state of siege."

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7. THE MIRACLE, AND AFTER

IN less than half an hour fresh coffee was ready, and a tumbler of milk was on the table. The great man thanked him who brought it by a volley of objurgations against the rest; and looking grandly at his companions he pointed to *it*, as the sufficient vindication of his methods. "That is the way to govern—make men do what you want!"

If he had said this only once or twice the matter might have been forgotten. But the sport was bad that day; there was nothing to distract his attention; and he praised himself and his ways so often that it "got on the nerves" of the forest officer, who went into the village in the evening, determined to discover *where* that milk had come from. He soon found out. It had been collected in small contributions from more than twenty nursing mothers in the village. . . .

The leader of the party, the man of weight, made a gruesome face when he heard this, and remembered, what he never afterwards forgot, how he had twice filled a big spoon with the milk and tasted it, and smacked his lips over it. He hurried to a bathroom, whence issued a sound as of a falling body, and then a succession of noises

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of the kind familiar in Channel steamers in nasty weather. One at least of the other two was in a similar condition and could not hide it. The bathroom being occupied, he leant over the veranda rail. The third man went out and disappeared a while behind a bush "or something like that."

"And now, as he knows you're a friend of mine and have been at the place, it's well you should know the whole story; for, if you named the place and looked at him, or asked if he had been there, or made any remote reference to milk or morning coffee, he'd conclude you were laughing at him and hate you for life. If he heard the story told he might take a fit of apoplexy."

Such is the true story of the miraculous milk, which common humanity forbade to print till the hero of the tale was dead, so that there was no need to be afraid of apoplexy. I would not have ventured to tell it at all if I had not been able to verify it by local inquiry; and as for the strange event of it, I may as well add that in 1909, when I was telling the story to a truthful Frenchman of my acquaintance in Burma, an excellent priest, as soon as I mentioned that the milk was brought—"woman's milk!" he cried, with twinkling eyes;

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and told me of another Reverend Father, whose flock adored him, and whose morning coffee, when he was on tour, was once supplied with milk so strangely that he took occasion to inquire about it, and learned that he had unconsciously been drinking from the same primeval source as the three officers who partook of the miraculous milk.

8. SOME OTHER MODERN INSTANCES

REPORTERS are more likely to be mistaken than miracles to happen is a maxim which David Hume has made a commonplace in Europe. So, since I may not name my witnesses, it may be expedient to make known that the instance mentioned by the priest was not the only parallel to this miracle. Another priest, whose word seems likely to be true, has told me of a part of China where "woman's milk" is an article of sale, and drunk by old people from a cup. The European practice of wet-nursing is essentially the same kind of thing.

The cheapness of tinned milk is what seems likely to keep the use of human milk in this way a rare event; and the explanation of the ready market for tinned milk in the extreme East is worth mention in this connexion. Milk is a

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staple food in Tartary and Central Asia; but the Chinese seldom use it. So the Europeans in China, who insisted on milk unreasonably, must often have partaken of the food of babies or of little pigs, especially in the days when tinned milk was less common than now. (*See*, for example, the letters of George Wingrove Cooke in *The Times*, 1857 and 1858, reprinted under the title *China*, by Routledge, 1858: chapter xxi., p. 248, footnote.). "There was a current story in the Canton factories that an Englishman scolding his servant because there was no milk on the breakfast-table was answered, 'How can? How can? That goat hab whilo (run away), that pig hab kill, that woman hab sick—how can?'"

About half a dozen stories, different in details but similar in substance to this history, have been reported to me. Some seem like mythical and later variations of this authentic story; and others may have a separate foundation in fact. Few of them, perhaps, could stand the minute local inquiry this one stood; and their existence is worth mention only to show that it was not a mere oddity, but typical and therefore credible—an event from which, in the language of the pulpit, we might draw some edifying inferences. Let readers do that for themselves.

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XI

ONE OF THE LAST OF THE MOGULS

1. FIRST ACQUAINTANCE

A DESCENDANT of Akbar, which means also a descendant of Baber, Timur and Gengis Khan, one of the "Delhi Princes," was living on a pension of Rs. 100 a month at Shwegyin (pronounced Shway-jeen) on the Sittang river in Lower Burma, when I went there as Deputy Commissioner in 1890. "He'll apply to you for a rise in his pension, and bother you as he has bothered everybody else," said my predecessor; and the application for a rise did not fail to come, but never any bother. On the contrary, I found him a conversable man. We went over some photos of portraits of members of his family, which had been bought in Agra that year. I gave him some of them, and was able to tell him of events that were distant in time and which he had never heard of, while he in turn told me what he knew of things more recent and what his people thought. It was interesting to

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know how modern history appeared to the family of the "Great Mogul."

2. LOOK AND DEMEANOUR

HIS outlook was remarkably definite and limited. He was almost as impervious to new ideas as my military English friends, who in several points resembled him so much that they might have been blood relations; but he had the excuse of age. He stooped a little under the burden of years and his hair was white, but there was vigour left yet. He had clearly been a big and powerful man, straight-shouldered, tall, hook-nosed, with a strong chin.

With all his limitations the old "Delhi Prince" was good company, garrulous but truthful. Nothing shows the human cur so much as needless mendacity. The Nemesis of lying, what spoils its profits, is that the knaves in time deceive themselves and cannot see or tell the truth when they try. It was easy to see in this old fellow's eyes as he spoke that he was a man who would not enjoy lying, who was not in the habit of lying, and who would be sure not to lie unless he wanted to do it. He had given other proofs of courage too. Mr. Snadden, the District Superintendent of Police, told me with enthusiasm how

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the old man from Delhi had once defended himself fiercely when attacked by robbers on a journey and beaten them off. Not less admirable than his courage was the modesty that made him see only a disagreeable incident in what most other men would have loved to talk and boast about. Ah! I knew a man who had been thief-catching in that very place not long before. If *he* had had such an experience he would have issued a Blue book about it, and got one friend to write a novel in his honour, and another to recommend him for the Victoria Cross.

Men are like wine—the strong improve by age, the weak grow sour; and yet to be a lifelong prisoner, even a state-prisoner on parole, makes cheerfulness difficult. So it was not surprising that the "Delhi Prince" was generally sad. His prevailing tone was one of immeasurable melancholy. He seldom, and only as a matter of politeness, disguised his feelings. He seemed to intimate, "I *will* be as sad as I like."

3. THE RIGHT TO WORK

ONE day I said to him, "It is because you have nothing to do that you are so unhappy." "What am I to do?" he asked.

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It was not easy to answer. It had to be admitted that he was "too old to fawn upon a nurse, too far in years to be a pupil now." What occupation could there be for him?

His conversation often recalled to mind the desolated lands of Central Asia. That was where Baber was reared, where Baber and the rest of the plentiful progeny of Timur were one and all claimants to thrones, and every man of them willing and eager to wade through blood to any throne within reach. They were never idle, slaughtering each other. They were like the tigers or medieval knights. Their trade was the royal sport of hunting men. At present it was the will of God that all such in India should be handcuffed a while; and indeed this particular scion of the old stock was no longer a Mogul, contemptuous of caste, willing to face the world on his own legs. Like the other Mogul royalties, more Indian than Mogul now, he believed in the divine right of his family as devoutly as Charles I. He thought the myriad-peopled India was his family's estate, mismanaged by unjust stewards who were dreadfully stingy to the heirs.

Nevertheless I was as sorry for that old man as for any cat in a cage. He rightly insisted that he was in a false position; but, though he could not

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see it, that was not the fault of the Indian Government. It resulted from circumstances beyond immediate control, and in particular from the fashion of breeding kings and such-like, a fashion that entails suffering at all times on the superfluous members of the selected families. Gibbon has commented on the rarity of royal resignations; but the fact is that they cannot resign. The few of them known to history that did resign had often cause to repent it. Besides, it is not for the royalties in business that sympathy is needed, but for the unemployed members of their families. For them, to-day as of old, "a ladder for families to go down by" is the one great social want; and the "right to work" is of all their rights the one they think of least and need the most.

4. AN OLD POINT OF VIEW

ONCE I met the "Delhi Prince" taking a morning walk, looking the embodiment of dreary misery. I said I had been thinking of how to find employment for him. He shook his head and sighed, and replied that it gave him pleasure to talk to me, and that he would call often but that he feared to intrude. "You have so much to do at any rate," he said, and glanced

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at the jail and court-houses within sight and shrugged his shoulders. We both smiled. I knew his thought.

The queer English ideas of justice he could not understand in the least. They seemed to him expensive chicane and the trickery of unscrupulous shopkeepers and Shylocks. But things like these he beheld impartially and coldly, as a rich man in London looks at the sufferings of the poor, which can never be his. Besides, I believe he blamed us local officers for all that, and supposed the Central Government had nothing to do with it in reality. What touched him to the quick was to see the inflated revenues squandered on a host of officials that were useless and (in his opinion) corrupt, instead of being devoted, as revenues should be, exclusively to the maintenance of soldiers and princes.

Herein was a point of resemblance to my young military friends. The only difference was the unimportant detail that he would assign to princes what they thought belonged to officers. [redacted] soldiers they both considered necessary evils, [redacted] they did not consider at all. [redacted]ness. Even Socialists would [redacted] implies the conscious pre- [redacted]rights to those of others;

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and these men are simply not aware of the rights of others and cannot see them at all. At first hand they are often obliging fellows and as capable of self-sacrifice as any Socialist. I might say more so, if it were fair (as it never is) to generalize from personal experience. Their failing is not selfishness, assuredly, it is simplicity, thoughtlessness. Of course it is true that evil is wrought by want of thought as well as want of heart. But think of the ill-feeling that might be minimized by candidly recognizing how often want of thought explains what is assigned to malice. Really, I do sometimes think that the worst sin of men, the only mortal sin, the sin that keeps humanity near the level of the beasts, is the wicked imputation of bad motives. It is nearly always a mistake too, as well as a nasty thing to do. It is worse than a crime, it is a blunder. So let nobody think ill of the "Delhi Prince" because he saw little but the rights of princes in this world. His opportunities to look round had been so few that he could not be expected to think differently. He "let himself go," when he felt at home, and though he knew little of books, his talk unconsciously illuminated the long Donnybrook fair of Indian history better than any book could have done.

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On this particular morning, however, I had no time for talk about things in general, and only said, "Come and see me on Sunday. I've something to show you."

5. FIT OCCUPATION

ONE item of my work then was to give effect to the wise policy of Sir Charles Crossthwaite of disarming Burma, so that the country should have a little quiet to bethink itself; and from a number of guns to be broken up I had selected a very fine one. It was cleaned and put into good order, and was lying on a chair in the drawing-room when the old man called on Sunday.

"I've found something for you to do," I said, and looked at it. His eyes lighted up suddenly, with a look that seemed to say, "Can that be for me? No, it is too good to be true."

"This is a gun to be destroyed," I continued. "If I gave it to a man who used it for robbery or lent it, I would get into serious trouble. But I can trust you. If you give me your word to lend it to nobody and handle it yourself only, it is yours, and here is some ammunition, and you can get more." The old man went away that day

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happy for once; and soon I heard and could see that he had renewed his youth. The woods around Shwegyin were the home of every kind of game, from birds to tigers.

6. THE END IN SIGHT

THE months went by like clouds, and at last a day came when the civil surgeon officially reported to me that the old "Delhi Prince" could not live much longer.

"Am I to tell him?"

"You cannot know."

"But I *do*. He cannot live . . . (the medical details are omissible)."

"Then on your own showing there is a possibility of several years' life."

"He *may* die to-night."

"So may *you* or I. Speak discreetly to the old man, without either lying or saying anything you are not sure of. Our lives are in the hands of God."

"That is just what he said himself when I was speaking to him."

"Leave it so."

But I sent on the medical report, and suggested that, as his illness would increase his

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needs and his life was nearly spent, his pension should be doubled. The hint was taken, and the old man was cheered by a rise of income. He grew better and seemed well again.

7. LAST SCENE OF ALL

THEN he took a young wife, I was told. "Quite right," I said, "for a man without a wife is either more or less than a man, and an old man needs a nurse." A friend of his remarked to me, "She is a decent woman," and I only answered, "That's *his* business," which was what he expected and wished me to say.

The impression produced by what was said to me at first was that a Burman bride was in contemplation; but a lady soon complained that the prince was trying to induce her Indian ayah (or maid) to marry him, I deliberately abstained from asking questions. The first law of politeness in Asia among men is to ignore the existence of the gentle sex. To do otherwise is an insult to the ladies themselves; and so it happened that I never knew whether the new princess was Indian or Burmese.

Some months later, in 1892, when riding towards Shwegyin, I met him out a-hunting, six

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miles north of the town. We dismounted and chatted pleasantly a while. He told of his sport, past and present, and seemed quite cheerful and serene and in his element, and said it had truly been the want of occupation that had made him miserable so long.

And so we parted agreeably, and he went his way and I saw him no more. I was away from Shwegyin when he died, not very long afterwards.

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XII

A BLAST OF AIR

1. A CYCLONE AT SEA

THE air in which we live is never seen by us. A materialist might refuse to believe that it existed. The particles of matter in it may be seen, but never itself. The pea-soup and other fogs of cities are visible, material, almost tangible smoke and slime, fit covers for these pandemoniums of spirits, the spoilers of men; for, as the doctors are discovering, or rather are beginning to tell, for it was discovered long ago, it is the lack of fresh air rather than the lack of food that, directly and indirectly, makes men degenerate. Once for all, whether we like it or not, we are the children of the air, for we live in it, as the fishes live in the sea.

This thought is as old as the hills. It is the explanation of the modifications of meaning of the word *spirit*, which meant breath at first. The breath of life was and ever is the air, which has remained intangible and invisible like heat, like

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life, like the soul itself, seen only in its doings. All the more delightful is it to watch the air at work by itself, as when the whirlwind blows. In 1893 I stood on the northern shore of Ramri Island, in the Bay of Bengal, and studied a cyclone. The sea was churned by the wind into mist, so that one seemed from the shore above to be gazing straight into the depths of the ocean, as if it might, but for the breeze, be possible to drive a cart into them safely and return. The drizzle of sea-water, which at any other time would have been impalpable, was flung against the face like pellets from a gun.

The captain of a coasting steamer told me later how he fought that storm in his ship for several hours, at the southern end of the same island. "Both anchors down, full steam ahead, and still we were moving steadily backwards towards the rocks. The wind just dropped in time; another hour and we would have touched the bottom. The mate was in the stokehole. The firemen, deck hands and passengers were unanimously howling to Allah, or praying or weeping for hours on end. The lifeboats were smashed, all but one, and it was gone, and we did not see it again till the return trip. It had been found high up on a big tree, not very far from the shore."

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2. A STORM IN THE MOUNTAINS

THERE is another sight worth seeing, a storm among the mountains. There the wind goes shrieking past; and in whirling away the snow-dust it takes to itself like a ghost a garment which is suddenly visible, while yet the shaping spirit is unseen by any eyes. The weird, unearthly presence does not linger. It cannot linger any more than the planets can stop. Whirling and writhing, away it goes, swiftly out of sight, like a soul in torment; and hosts of others like it follow fast, like hell let loose. The rocks beside you stay, and are cold to the touch. The sky seems near. You hanker after wings like a bird's; but recollect that birds and men alike are children of the air. On an airless star they would drop dead. Even if we could mount into the ether we could not live there. We are held to the earth by the need of air, as the fishes are kept in the sea; we cannot live outside it. The air is to us what the sea is to the fishes. Thus, in all ways, has Heaven securely provided that men shall stay where they are. As the old proverb runs, good care has been taken that the trees shall not grow to the sky.

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3. LOOKING FORWARD

IT is the fault of men that they are not content, for Heaven makes no mistakes:

> "The merry world is rolling round,
> And men might all be jolly;
> For every tragic farce is found
> The deed of human folly."

The smoke and foul breath of London and Paris pollute the oceans of the moving air as little as their sewage spoils the mid-Atlantic seas. Men are such fools that they do dirtily breathe each others' emanations; and, each winking at his neighbour, let the smoke go free. But time brings roses. Now that doctors do seriously apply themselves to prevent diseases, following the sublime example of Pasteur, we will heed them and learn sense. We shall never altogether desert the mountains, it may be hoped, the "fit and unwalled temples" where the mind finds harmony with heaven; but we shall not need to go there merely to fill the lungs. We will cease to dwarf and poison our small successors. We will make it the universal birthright to breathe the unpolluted air.

By doing so we shall only take one step more on the old road upwards, and adapt recent

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inventions to civilized use. Civilization itself is nothing but the art of living together. Our present licence of air-pollution is worthy of the most heedless of our forefathers. We are not so much degenerating as reverting a little, in the worst of our misdeeds. A witty French historian wrote that in the Middle Ages people lived upon their dunghills. If he had said "beside" their dunghills, he would have been less witty but perfectly exact. That was what they did. They do so yet, in most parts of the world, and even in so doing have made an advance upon ways more primitive still. There are tribes that have not even learned the use of dunghills. I have seen them close—too nauseous for description. It is very hard for civilized man to realize how far he has come, and how much he owes to his forbears.

Meanwhile it is less wickedness than absence of mind that has turned the industrial countries into hells; and the verdict of heaven, or nature, or whatever we call the life of the world, is becoming plain enough. As they who live and thrive the best survive the best, then it must follow, as the day the night, that the peoples who take thought soonest and best for sanitation will reach the best results in their labours. There is little thinking

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needed, but rather moral qualities, justice and self-denial, and a right appreciation of the value of clean air. Why should we not take care to keep clean the air we are taking into our lungs and lives, as well as the hands by which we carry food to our lips? We need no teaching to abstain from eating or drinking the material excreta of others, or what comes from their stomachs. Surely it is only because we are absent-minded that we cheerfully swallow whatever comes out of their lungs, and so, in sonorous but sacred words, we breathe damnation to ourselves. Faugh! Fling open the windows for a blast of air.

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XIII

THE UNLUCKY THIEVES

THE scene is at Yandon. It is a small town on the Irrawaddy, an odorous centre of the Delta trade in napee or balachong. That is a condiment to make rice palatable, prepared by pressing fish or shellfish with salt and leaving the mixture to ferment—a kind of cheap and popular caviare. The Burman likes his fish in the form of napee with an ancient flavour. Think of a pervading pungent stench and you have the odour of Yandon, by which the steamer people say they can know it in the dark; and yet, if only you could stop your nose, as well as custom stops the noses of its residents, the place is tolerable enough.

It has the usual amenities of the Delta. The great current of one of the main channels of the Irrawaddy swirls past it, brown with the mingled silt of the Burmese hills and the far-off highlands of Central Asia, and regurgitating with the tides of the adjoining sea. The evergreen aspects of

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the land around abate the glare of the sun overhead, and the fresh sea-breezes sweep unrestricted over all. The land is almost as level as the ocean. Its greatest heights are the tree-tops and an occasional temple or pagoda pinnacle. Such is the Burman Delta, a tolerable place of abode for the Burmans in spite of mosquitoes. Its fields give rich rice harvests. Its rivers teem with fish. But, tho' every prospect pleases, yet man is often vile.

At 5 P.M. on Friday, 30th October 1908, Mr. Chon, aged 30, basket-seller, and his friend Sopay, aged 36, a labourer or porter, were returning together from the bazaar to Mr. Chon's house in another part of Yandon. Their way was along the dike which banks the river; and as they walked along it they met police-constable Pomyit and two acquaintances of his, young Po Yon and Shway Pee. Shway Pee was a man over forty years of age, and had just come out of jail. Beware of British prejudice! In Burma it is recognized that imprisonment is a misfortune which might overwhelm the most virtuous. Everyone was ready to admit that Shway Pee might have been more sinned against than sinning. He was certainly a man of varied experiences; but perhaps nothing he ever suffered had been

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more trying than what he was to endure this day.

In a very loud voice he cried to Sopay, "You must come to the police-station. There is a case against you."

"He spoke so loud," said Mr. Chon afterwards, "that I heard what he said though I am hard of hearing."

Sopay answered him simply, "I will go."

So Shway Pee and the policeman, with the supposed criminal between them, turned back towards the police-station, still going along the dike. Po Yon followed the three; and last of all came Mr. Chon, "hard of hearing" but all agog, much excited, anxious to see what would be the end of this.

The policeman had as yet been a silent partner in the affair, but, as they went along, he grew uneasy. Even in Burma there are limits to what a policeman can do. They were passing the house of an elder of the quarter, Ko Po Saing (Po Saing, Esquire). It was on the low ground on one side of the dike along which they were going. The river was on the other. The policeman decided to have a word with Po Saing; and as he went into Po Saing's house for that judicious purpose, the "prisoner" Sopay decided

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to take part in the consultation and followed him. This left Shway Pee alone, and Po Yon joined him. As those two, Shway Pee and Po Yon, stood together on the dike, awaiting the result of the talking in Po Saing's house, Mr. Chon the basket-seller came gradually nearer them.

"How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done." A dealer returning home for the day from the bazaar was not likely to have his pockets empty. Sopay had not offered them a copper to let him go, the mangy "son of a b—h" that he was. They were watching Mr. Chon as he approached, and he noticed them draw together and whisper and look at him. On the side of the dike next the river, if he could be induced to go down there, he would be in a solitude like the desert. "Induce?" There are quick means of inducement known to rogues. Shway Pee unexpectedly seized his hands and pulled him down the slope towards the water. In a few seconds he was safely out of sight of other people.

Po Yon lost no time. He ransacked Mr. Chon's pockets, and—here lies the pathos of this pitiful tale—he found only tenpence one farthing, in clumsy Indian coppers! Many a man has won a great sum by less address! And it was long

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before they could believe their eyes and realize that there was so little to be had—another misfortune!

They could not take from Mr. Chon more than there was in his possession. So they let him go at last, and then he began shouting lustily. At that very moment his companion Sopay was emerging from Po Saing's. Po Saing had advised the policeman to let him go and he was set free. The shouts of Mr. Chon now brought out Po Saing too, and the policeman and others; and from every house within hearing people came out to look. They looked, and this was what they saw and heard—a sight maybe unique in the annals of crime. Po Yon, with the nimbleness of youth, ran in front; and after him, in distress, was hurrying middle-aged Shway Pee, the experienced veteran, excitedly shouting in the ears of all, "Po Yon, give it back! Give it back, Po Yon! You'll get jail for it, Po Yon, though it's only tenpence farthing!"

The prophecy was a faithful one. They got eighteen months' hard labour each.

They appealed, and so obtained a place in history, for it was the present historian who heard their appeals. But he confirmed the sentences.

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XIV

THE ROYAL BANQUET-SONG

An Anecdote of Caliph Haroun al-Raschid

OUT of sight, out of mind, is as true of societies as of individuals. In these democratic days, as much as before, the man who is minded to speak or sing the truth has, first of all, to find some means of livelihood; for if he wishes to be taken seriously, like St. Paul, he should imitate St. Paul by being self-supporting.

> "Among the blind, a single eye
> May lift the seeing one on high;
> But let the purblind crowd suspect
> Your eyes are armed by intellect
> To see what they could not detect,
> Then deem not honours they will give;
> Be thankful if they let you live."

And well may he be thankful; and if he imagines there ever was or ever will be anything more to be hoped for by the prophet or teller of the truth, he is deceiving himself. The flattering lies of the professional parasites supported by the various Mæcenases, which nobody at the time supposed

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that anyone would believe, are taken for gospel by persons ill-informed to-day; and, thinking they would have a better time under other conditions, they want a change.

Truth is better than fiction; and however dubious it may be in some details, and vague in date, there is an anecdote of the resplendent Haroun al-Raschid worth telling, as likely to convey a true notion of the days of *The Arabian Nights*, when the caliphs were reigning at Bagdad. It is quoted here from Field's *Tales of the Caliphs* (Murray, 1909), and purports apparently (but the editor is not explicit on the point) to be taken from Masoudi, the Arabian historian, who has been compared to Herodotus, and whom Renan compared to Sainte-Beuve. Altering nothing but the literal prose of the translation of the song into verse, to be sung to the tune of our melody "God save the King," I now transcribe the story from Mr. Field's book.

"Haroun al-Raschid became caliph in the year A.D. 786, and he ranks among the caliphs who have been most distinguished by eloquence, learning and generosity. During the whole of his reign, he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca or carried on war with the unbelievers nearly every year. His daily prayers exceeded the

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number fixed by the law (five), and he used to perform the pilgrimage on foot, an act which no previous caliph had done. . . . When he did not perform it (the pilgrimage) himself he sent three hundred substitutes. . . .

"He was fond of poetry and poets, and patronized literary and learned men. Religious controversies were hateful to him. Eulogy he relished highly, especially eulogy by gifted poets, whom he richly rewarded.

"The historian Asmai relates the following anecdote. One day the caliph gave a feast in a magnificently-decorated hall. During the feast he sent for the poet Abu'l Atahiyah, and commanded him to depict in verse the gorgeous scene.

"The poet began :—

"'Glorious in palace great !
Get all you wish from Fate!'

"'Very good,' exclaimed Raschid. 'Let us hear the rest.'

"The poet continued :—

"'You we'll obey !'

"'Excellent!' said the caliph. 'Go on!'

"The poet replied :—

"'But, when you come to die,
Quick, then, as shadows fly,
So go your pleasures by,—
Nothing shall stay !'

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"Raschid burst into tears." (Here it should be remarked that he was an habitual drinker of wine, and was sure to be more or less under its influence at the time.)

Fadl, the son of Yahya (Haroun's vizier), seeing this, said to the poet: "The caliph sent for you to divert him, and you have plunged him into melancholy." (The poet's head was not quite safe on his shoulders for a while. One can imagine the sensational silence among the banqueters till the caliph had finished sobbing. Then there was a sigh of relief.) "Let him be," said Raschid. "He saw us in a state of blindness, and tried to open our eyes."—

The rest is silence. It is not written that the poet was rewarded, and he probably seemed to his neighbours an unpractical person who deserved to be poor for the rest of his days. The Fadl who figures here was of course one of the Barmecide family, the identical Fadl whom the caliph afterwards flogged, almost to death, to make him show where his wealth was hidden. The sneer of Hamlet to the courtiers that they were sponges whom the King could at any time squeeze dry again was far from being a mere figure of speech "in the brave days of old."

The wildest socialist in America has not yet

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proposed a Bill of Attainder confiscating the fortune of any multi-millionaire; yet to the resplendent Haroun al-Raschid, or to William the Conqueror, such a thing would have come as natural as winking. Methinks there is a moderation in the multitude which sages should admire.

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XV

HUXLEY AND WILBERFORCE

[*Reprinted from the "Westminster Review," March 1907*]

1. AT OXFORD IN 1860

"NEWS from Oxford," many a man has written, "there never can be any. We are in the backwaters of the Universe. You may even compare us to a little puddle where not even a tornado could raise a wave."

To a judicious elder it might seem better to compare such a respectable collection of boarding-schools to a stock farm with good fences, where foals and calves are fed and groomed and as far as possible kept out of mischief. From such a place, while all goes well, there is no news to be expected. Of the youngsters from far and near, one herd succeeds another as wave follows wave. But at times some adult visitors disturb the monotony of adolescent existence, and that was how it happened that once in the nineteenth century there was what is called a scene at

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Oxford, something to see and hear, more interesting than antiquated masonry.

It was on Saturday, 30th June 1860, that the event took place—the famous debate in the crowded lecture-room of the Museum. The occasion was a meeting of the British Association; and though nearly all the excited crowd have now flitted away like ghosts at cockcrow and left only a little mouldering matter in the graveyards behind them, so many of them made reports of it at the time that by comparing one with another we can see and hear it yet.[1] We can hear not the speakers only, but also the exultant whispers of the clergy massed in the middle of the room, and the sympathetic tittering of the ladies, overflowing in all directions, "packed into the very windows." And now begins Dr Draper, of New York, to inquire nasally, not of the ladies only but of all and sundry: "Air we a fortuitous concourse of atoms?"

"Fortuitous atoms indeed!" the ladies cannot help thinking, if they think at all. There is little to distract attention. One cannot see dresses well in such a crowd. On the platform Professor Henslow was in the chair, and Professor Beale and

[1] *See* the *Life of Huxley*, I., pp. 179-189, and the books, etc., there quoted in the text and notes.

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Huxley on his left, with Sir Benjamin Brodie, Sir J. Hooker and Sir J. Lubbock.

"Nobody in particular, my dears, nothing to look at there;" but on his right—ah! there is the Bishop of Oxford, Bishop Wilberforce, whom irreverent people call Soapy Sam and undergraduates here call Sammivel.

"Fine-looking man!".

"He's going to smash Darwin, my dears, haven't you heard?"

"Of course, that's why I'm here, but isn't it hot? Why do they let people block these windows? I'm sure that, for all that girl—will understand, she might as well be anywhere else."[1]

"Hush! they'll hear us!"

The undergraduates were few, a small minority in the north-west corner, partly because it was not term time, partly because they could employ better a fine Saturday in summer. Huxley himself was there chiefly by accident. His wife was at Hardwicke, near Reading. He had meant to join her, and had said so to Robert Chambers when he met him in the street yesterday. This was the Chambers who wrote the *Vestiges of*

[1] It is only *morally* certain that such remarks were made. No exact authority can be given.

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Creation, famous then, and he remonstrated hotly and talked of Huxley's "deserting them."

"Oh, if you are going to take it that way," said Huxley, "I'll come and take my share of whatever is going on."

So Saturday saw him on the platform there. He was so like the Bishop as to be mistaken for a son.

"And if he isn't a son, is he a nephew, or who is he?"

"Hush! I don't know."[1]

It was a similar accident that made "Dicky Green" be among the undergraduates. He, too, had not meant to go, but he met one Jenkins going down, who proposed to him to come and "hear the Bishop of Oxford smash Darwin."

"Smash Darwin! Smash the Pyramids!" cried "Dicky," muttering something about impertinence, which made Jenkins explain: "The Bishop was a first-class in mathematics, you know, and so has a right to treat on scientific matters."

Green made no reply, but decided to go, and went, and when in the crowd perhaps wished at first that he had not.

Certainly for "the first hour and more" it was

[1] It is only *morally* certain that such remarks were made. No exact authority can be given.

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tiresome. People felt they had to be polite to the stranger. Dr. Draper had them at discretion and "droned along," turning first to the right and then to the left; and smelling-salts were needed, and fair bosoms heaved, and many an eye grew dim. The only thing any one remembered was that, in the most obliging manner, to start the fun, he did bring in a reference to the *Origin of Species*. And at last he finished.

Everybody drew a long breath. Then the clergy shouted lustily for the Bishop, but the Bishop kept his seat.

"First spoke a layman from Brompton," reported Canon Farrar. "He, in a stentorian voice, let off his theological venom. Then jumped up . . ." a reverend tutor with a thin voice, "saying much the same. We did not want any theological discussion, so we shouted them down."

The fact was that people were tired of waiting. Mr. Dingle rose to show how to improve on Darwin, as if *that* was what was wanted. Poor Mr. Dingle! He used the blackboard.—"Let this point A be man, and let that point B be the mawnkey."

"Mawnkey! mawnkey!" screamed the chorus, till he subsided in confusion, and then there were more calls for the Bishop.

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The Bishop then rose, but only to say that he understood his friend Professor Beale had something to say first; and after Professor Beale had ended came the "smashing of Darwin." The "white chokers," who were abundant, Green reported, "cheered lustily, a sort of 'pitch it into him' cheer," and the orator felt the kindling warmth of a sympathetic audience. He spoke in "dulcet tones" and his "most persuasive manner" in "well-turned periods," and fairly delighted all the white chokers and the angels in pretty dresses by his witty climax.

"I have been told that Professor Huxley has said that he didn't see that it mattered much to a man whether his grandfather was an ape or not. Let the learned Professor speak for himself!" (He! he! he!) Then "turning to his antagonist with a smiling insolence," according to most of the reporters, he "begged to know was it through his grandfather or his grandmother that he claimed his descent from a monkey?"

In the applause that followed, Huxley slapped his knee and whispered to Brodie, "the Lord hath delivered him into my hands"; but, as he wrote to Darwin, "that sagacious old gentleman stared at me as if I had lost my senses," and certainly did not guess what was meant.

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Then the Bishop became solemn, as a Bishop should, and perorated in his finest pulpit tones that Darwin's views were contrary to the revelation of God in the Holy Scriptures.

"There's no denying that, anyhow," the ladies might feel, and their white handkerchiefs waved and fluttered in the air at the triumphant close of the eloquent speech.

"What a treat it has been! What a bore one cannot go now!" they may have whispered.

While the Bishop rested, and one can imagine him complacently wiping his forehead after he resumed his seat, there came forward in response to the calls for him the slight, tall figure, "stern and pale, very quiet and very grave," of Huxley.

"He was received coldly," Sir M. Foster reported, "just a cheer of encouragement from his friends, the audience as a whole not joining in it." But soon, very soon, all were listening eagerly. What was this he was saying? Shocking! He "first explained," said Mr. Vernon Harcourt, "that the suggestion was of descent through thousands of generations from a common ancestor, and then went on to this effect:—

"'But if this question is treated, not as a matter for the calm investigation of science, but as

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a matter of sentiment, and if I am asked whether I would choose to be descended from the poor animal of low intelligence and stooping gait, who grins and chatters as we pass, or from a man, endowed with great ability and a splendid position, who should use these gifts' (here, as the point became clear, there was a great outburst of applause, which mostly drowned the end of the sentence) 'to discredit and crush humble seekers after truth, I hesitate what answer to make.'"

There was no shorthand reporter. J. R. Green's version [1] was:—

"I asserted, and I repeat that a man has no reason to be ashamed of having an ape for his grandfather. If there were an ancestor whom I should feel shame in recalling, it would rather be a *man*, a man of restless and versatile intellect, who, not content with success in his own sphere of activity, plunges into scientific questions with which he has no real acquaintance, only to obscure them by an aimless rhetoric, and distract the attention of his hearers from the real point at issue by eloquent digressions and skilled appeals to religious prejudice."

Thus swimmingly started, Huxley went on

[1] *Letters of J. R. Green*, p. 45. I omit the adjective "equivocal," which seems erroneous. *See* footnotes, *Life of Huxley*, I., 185.

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well, and concluded amidst applause almost equal to that bestowed on the Bishop, though the white handkerchiefs were not mentioned this time by any reporter. On the contrary, it is recorded that there were many angry looks cast upon those who applauded him loudest, and one of them wrote: "We felt we were expected to say, 'how abominably the Bishop was treated,' or to be considered outcasts and detestable."

Nevertheless there is ample evidence that the best of "the Bishop's party" felt abashed, and nobody of sense doubted that he had made a mistake in being needlessly personal, and deserved the rebuke he received.

He probably felt so himself. Of course he never said so. The Church of Rome is infallible, and the Church of England is never wrong. But the most pleasant part of the whole episode is the sequel which remains to be told, and that is that in 1891, nearly eighteen years after the Bishop's horse had stumbled on the Surrey Downs and pitched him suddenly into the dark, Huxley wrote to a friend saying:

"In justice to the Bishop, I am bound to say he bore no malice, but was always courtesy itself when we occasionally met in after years."

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2. POST-OBIT

THERE is another fanciful sequel which perhaps grew out of the real one, for a little bit of reality may germinate in vacant minds and grow more wonderfully there than any fabled beanstalk. Various versions have been given by young men fresh from Oxford. Here is the best, or rather a distilled quintessence of them all, as a curiosity; for such it soon will be, when time has altered Oxford, "where the old hopes are hardest to be lost."

In the rotting Roman Empire, the orthodoxy of antiquity lingered longest in the country villages; but in modern England the villages are suburbs of the towns, and it is to Oxford that we have to go to find a living interest in the dreams of the Middle Ages. It makes one sad to feel that time can ever alter Oxford and is even sure to do it, "as the flood carries away in the night a sleeping village." And then, when change has come, this story may have an historical interest. Meanwhile it is good enough to tell for its own sake. Stories are like women. They please best when they please by their intrinsic attractions.

When Huxley died, he was agreeably surprised to find himself doing a journey in an electric

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railway underground, in a carriage better than the best Pullman cars, but not unlike them, and just sufficiently filled to be pleasant. The train was incredibly fast, but went without a jolt. Only by feeling for it, so to speak, could he, when standing, discover a gentle wave of motion, which became imperceptible when he subsided into a chair. Before he could talk to any fellow-passenger, the train came to a stop. He got out with the others, and went through a long and spacious passage, bright with shining tiles and electric lamps. It was more like the nave of Westminster Abbey than any tunnel, and, long though it was, he had not ceased admiring it when he came out into what seemed to be an infinitely improved Crystal Palace, expanded into boundlessness. At any rate, the eye could see no bounds.

The light was bluish, but soft, abundant and agreeable. Circular fans were whirling above little round tables, at one of which he took his place and called for an ice.

"I fear there must be some mistake," he said to the smiling waiter, who stood rubbing his hands after fetching the ice-cream, and was asking what he wanted to drink.

"Mistake, sir?" asked the waiter, looking at the plate he had just put down.

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"Oh, not in this; this is all right," said Huxley, sipping, and looking again round the bustling scene, where every man and woman seemed to be cheerful and merrily employed. "What I fear is that some mistake has been made about my destination. The ticket I gave up at the door was for . . ." He paused.

"Hell, sir?" asked the waiter, briskly.

"Yes."

"Then that's all right; and even if it had been different, you could not have been better off anywhere than we are here."

"But, but," began Huxley, "I don't want to hurt your feelings, but in fact it was commonly reported and believed on earth that this place was—well—disagreeably warm."

"Oh, to be sure, it *used* to be so, but so many scientific gentlemen have come down of late that we have now all the latest improvements, with additional advantages of our own. Besides, there's nobody here against his will. You can extinguish yourself as easily as a candle, whenever you like. People stay here far longer than they used to do, and lots of those in the other place envy us now. I assure you that the Celestial Inspector who has just been down to look at our arrangements—they come regularly, you know, to prevent overcrowd-

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ing, and make sure the fires are equable—a mere excuse for an outing, I do believe—was saying to His Highness a few minutes ago—I heard it myself, I was taking him some liquor, as he felt thirsty in the heat of the furnace-rooms—I heard him say—and I don't think it was politeness, for you know these people up there cannot make polite speeches, they have always to talk straight—so I'm sure he meant what he said, and says he: 'I wish I could remain here altogether; you are so snug. The wet clouds on the way are not attractive.'

"Then His Highness said, 'You cannot be afraid of sciatica, surely,' and they both laughed and laughed, and when they were done laughing, 'It's the company,' said the Inspector. 'The company here would atone for any climate. It makes me hoarse to think of the eternal Hallelujahs, and these tiresome old women. They are in millions, like the sands of the desert, and every one of them thinks herself *The Queen*, and wants Jesus all to herself! It is as absurd and as monotonous as a lunatic asylum. Poor Jesus!'

"Look! There's the Inspector passing now, sir—not unlike yourself, if I may venture to say so."

As everybody else was rising, in honour of His

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Highness and the Celestial Inspector passing, Huxley rose too, and the Celestial aforesaid happening to look round—

"I hope to come back and see you another time, Huxley," cried Wilberforce, for he it was!

He waved his hand affectionately and smiled, as if he were alive again for a moment; and then as he looked elsewhere his countenance gradually changed. Mephistopheles stood grinning sardonically, while the sad Celestial turned reluctantly heavenwards, and floated upwards and away with a look of constrained resignation on his features, an expression of infinite ennui, if that can be called an expression, which seemed to have become suddenly as unchangeable as the streak of the Milky Way.

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XVI

AT SEA IN TIME OF WAR

Three Anecdotes Illustrating the Force of Example

[*Reprinted from "Chambers's Journal."*]

1. PRELUDE

THESE anecdotes were first told to me in Burma by my friend, Peter Clouston MacTaggart. Shortly after hearing them I lamented to him that such stories should be lost. "Then why not put them into writing? Isn't Captain Orr's word good enough?" I had to admit that nobody in Greenock doubted the word of Captain Orr. He is an excellent old veteran, intelligent and matter-of-fact. Everybody that knows him would believe what he said. But as several years had passed since the stories were told to MacTaggart, and I could only write down my recollection of his recollection of what Captain Orr said, that was too roundabout to be worth much. Thereupon he promised to lend me a

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letter written by Captain Orr, with leave to make use of it; and he kept his word.

Here is the letter. It touches in parts on family matters that do not concern the public, so I shorten it here and there. Captain Orr's own words are indicated by quotation marks. For the rest, let it suffice the reader to know that the venerable old gentleman is still alive and healthy,[1] about ninety-four years of age, and known to me and many others as perfectly veracious:

"GREENOCK, 18*th November* 1895.

"MY DEAR PETER CLOUSTON MACTAGGART,—I was much gratified with the postscript to your last letter: . . . 'If you have time I would be very pleased to get the story of grandpapa's father you remember telling me about. . . .'

"The action of itself was very short; but, strange to say, it . . . stimulated and led on to . . . two enterprises of the same kind, one of them after many years, and all of which I know to be true.

"You must excuse the yarn of an old sailor, whose mind dwells more on the past than the present; but I think . . . some historical circumstances bearing on the period at which my tale

[1] 1903.

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begins, will make the incident . . . clearer. . . . For I well remember that, in my early youth, wars by sea and land and the martial deeds of our sailors and soldiers were the general conversation in society high and low, *when timber toes and wooden arms seemed to run in the blood of some families.*"

2. BOLD BOB CLOUSTON

THE letter went on :—" Of my uncle, Captain Robert Clouston (your great-grandfather), I heard . . . a great deal when a very little boy from a lady who had the rearing of my sisters and me. For I was an orphan when seven years of age. She was his and my sisters' cousin ; and as she was brought up amidst sailors, her mind was stored with their deeds and songs, many of which are as fresh in my mind to-day as when first poured into my willing ear eighty years ago ; and often I heard the story of ' Bold Bob Clouston ' told with great glee in all its details.

" It was an eventful period." Napoleon had closed all Continental ports to foreign trade. Britain declared them blockaded, and swept French traders from the sea. France sent out privateers, " fast-sailing, well-armed vessels, under French

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Admiralty commission, to capture merchant ships. . . . And daring fellows they were, and they captured many Greenock ships, some of them even at the entrance of the Clyde."

Your grandfather had letters and papers relating to his father's exploit; but when he became Lord Provost of Glasgow he was interviewed about it, and must have given away the papers, "for he told me latterly that he did not know where they were." So I cannot give the exact date or name the ports. It was in the beginning of the nineteenth century, and in seas not far from home.

The maritime law of war, "then, as now, was that when a ship was captured at sea she had to be sent to the nearest port of the capturer's country. . . . The captain and several of the crew were retained on board," to show she was a lawful prize.

"Captain Clouston was proceeding on his voyage (where from or to I have forgotten) when his ship was captured by a French privateer. . . . When he saw capture was inevitable, he determined to attempt the desperate game of regaining possession of his ship, and, before he surrendered, concealed a loaded pistol. For he knew that France had abolished the humane practice of cartel" (exchange of prisoners), and so he believed

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that, on reaching a French port, he would be sent "far up the interior of France" as a prisoner of war, to "lie and rot, it might be for life, as many already were . . . doing. . . . He also knew that if he failed he would speedily have the rope round his neck and be hanging at the yard-arm of his own ship.

"The ship was now a prize, with a French officer and crew on board." The captain, cook, and an apprentice were kept on board "for condemnation, as it was termed"; and the cook and apprentice agreed with their captain that even death was better than "to linger out a starved existence in a prison till they were grey-headed or dead." So they watched their captors, while the captors were thinking only of having a good time and seeing France soon.

The crew took dinner in the forecastle. They entered it from deck through a hatchway, going about ten feet down a steep ladder. Upon the hatchway was a strong hinged lid, fitted with hasp and staple. When the crew went down to dinner they made the apprentice steer. Meanwhile the French officer and the captain dined together in the cabin. The cook, though a prisoner, was made to work, and he waited table.

Suddenly, one day at dinner, Captain Clouston

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"held his pistol to the Frenchman's face," and the cook "threw an empty flour-bag over his head and quickly tied his hands behind his back and his feet round the legs of the table," so that he could neither move nor make a noise.

Captain Clouston and the cook next went to the forecastle. Only one man could come up the ladder at a time, so the pistol made them masters of the situation. They shut down and secured the hatchway. The whole French crew was trapped, and Captain Clouston was again in command of his ship. In a few days he reached a British port and handed over his prisoners to the authorities.

Even in the days of our wars with Napoleon such a feat caused a sensation, and in particular "inflated the minds of young shipmasters with the resolution that, if caught in the same circumstances, they would be equal to the occasion."

3. CAPTAIN LYON

"TWO years afterwards Captain Robert Lyon, in the ship *John*, belonging, I think, to Rodger Stewart & Company of Greenock, . . . was captured by a Frenchman, . . . and an

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officer and prize crew put on board to conduct her to a French port."

Now, to understand what follows, it is needful to realize the painful dilemma in which a privateer captain was placed by a run of success. If a prize were a good ship and had a valuable cargo, he lost the best of the plunder if he burned or sank her. Yet, if he put a prize crew on board and sent her away, he reduced his "effective strength." Thus it was that *La Fort*, "one of the finest frigates of the French navy, . . . being in the East Indies, captured a large number of British East India Company's ships; and to secure such valuable prizes so weakened her own crew that she fell an easy prey to the British frigate, *Sybelle*—Captain Cook."

So "it is likely the prize crew put on board Captain Lyon's ship was as few as possible, and you may be sure not their best men. Be that as it may, they were not long on board their prize till they found there was plenty of rum and soon got merry; and, as Frenchmen, not quite up to the potency" of rum, were one day "dead drunk, officer and all. Captain Lyon did not let the chance slip." He handcuffed the officer, made the sailors prisoners in the forecastle, and set the ship's course for England. An adventure he met

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on the way would be out of place in a novel as too improbable ; but it is a fact.

The very next day after the re-capture he was chased by a French privateer, from whom he could not escape. "That was dreadfully bad news to the poor French officer." If the ship were captured again and sent to France after all, he, "a commissioned naval officer, would be tried by court-martial and sentenced to death for such gross dereliction of duty as to allow two men and a boy to make him and his crew prisoners and recapture a valuable prize. He had good reason to prefer being now taken to Britain "as a prisoner of war, with the hope of a safe return by-and-by.

On his earnest entreaty Captain Lyon restored to him his sword, and hoisted the French tricolour above the Union Jack. When the privateer came alongside, the French officer, wearing his sword and in full uniform, stood on the poop and explained to the captain of the new privateer that this ship was already a prize of another, and that he was the officer in charge conducting her to a French port. "The ruse succeeded. The privateer sheered off to look for other game.

"The officer re-delivered his sword to Captain Lyon," and nothing else happened till they reached Loch Ryan, "where he obtained assistance," and

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thence "conveyed her to Greenock. He was handsomely rewarded by owners and underwriters."

Captain Lyon kept the French officer's sword, and in after years at home often told the story of how he got it. After his death his widow gave it to Mr. W. P. Paul of Greenock, who has it still. Mrs. Lyon herself said that a neighbour of theirs, a Mrs. Wilson, had a son who was often in their house. Many years after Captain Lyon's death, his widow told Mrs. Paul she "had a perfect recollection of the little boy Wilson, and that he many times saw the sword, and often heard the story from Captain Lyon himself of how he recaptured his ship."

4. CAPTAIN WILSON

THE clouds go swiftly by, so, too, the years. In the beginning of 1862 that little boy was Captain Wilson, commanding the large merchant ship *Emile St Pierre*, with a valuable cargo on board, bound from Calcutta to Charleston. Before leaving Calcutta, the captain knew the Yankees were quarrelling among themselves; but he had no news of war or of a blockade. Great, therefore, was his surprise on being stopped off Charleston and boarded by the American war-

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steamer, *James Adger*. He was told his ship was made a prize "for attempting to enter a blockaded port." The crew, all but himself, the cook and steward, were taken on board the warship, and "a prize-master with a number of American seamen put on board to navigate" the *Emile St Pierre* to Philadelphia, with the captain, cook and steward on board, "for proof of condemnation."

Captain Wilson first made sure the cook and steward would stand by him, and were willing to run all risks; then, on the third day after the capture, he trapped the American seamen in the forecastle and put the prize-master in irons.

"But now . . . commenced" the hardest part of his work. He had "only two men, neither of them sailors. . . . The ship was leaky, and pumps had to be attended to; that of itself labour enough" for three men. "He had to steer away from the American coast to keep out of the track of ships, for fear of falling into the hands of another man-of-war. The whole" breadth . . . "of the Atlantic Ocean had to be navigated before a British port could be reached. One of the three had always to be at the helm to steer the ship. There was the heavy labour of reducing and setting sails according to the weather during the uncertain, tempestuous month of March," and

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"the daily duty of ascertaining his position by . . . latitude and longitude. . . . Most disagreeable of all was the necessity of keeping fifteen men imprisoned in the forecastle in sanitary condition and supplied with food and water—the latter a very scarce article after a long passage from the East Indies," to say nothing of the unlucky "prize-master locked up in the cabin. . . . For nearly five long weeks, night and day, had this vigilant ordeal to be maintained by these three men, till they arrived at Liverpool on the 21st of April."

"*Extract from 'Liverpool Directory,'* 1880.
'*Annals of Liverpool,' p.* 67.

"'1862. *April* 21.—The *Emile St Pierre* from Calcutta arrived under command of Captain Wilson. She had previously been captured by the Federal war-steamer, *James Adger*, on the 18th of March off Charleston, a prize crew sent on board, and ordered to Philadelphia, the steward and cook only being allowed to remain on board with Captain Wilson.

"'On the third morning she was most gallantly re-captured. . . . The crew were placed in irons, and the vessel was brought safely into this port.

"'*May 3rd.*—Captain Wilson was presented

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with a gold chronometer and a coffee and tea service subscribed for by one hundred and seventy merchants, a gold medal from the Mercantile Marine Association, and a sum of two thousand pounds sterling by the owners. The steward and cook were each presented with a purse of seventy guineas and a silver medal. The owners also presented them with three hundred pounds each.'"

Some days later, without giving a new date to his letter, Captain Orr concludes it.

"Since writing the foregoing I have a letter from Mr. W. P. Paul, who . . . has the French officer's sword. . . . He gives a graphic account of the re-capture of the *John*, as he received it from Mrs. Lyon. It differs from what I heard only in some minor details, not worth mentioning.

"Thus you see, dear Peter, how one brave action is the exciting cause to another. Captain Clouston . . . instigated Captain Lyon," and Captain Lyon's trophy, the French officer's sword, and his account of it, stimulated Captain Wilson to repeat "the same daring deed after sixty years. . . .—Yours truly, WILLIAM ORR."

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XVII

ALPHONSE DAUDET

1. A WORKMAN'S SATURDAY NIGHT IN PARIS

BETTER than most of Daudet's novels, in the opinion of many, better almost, if anything can be better, than his *Tartarin de Tarascon*, are the life-like sketches of real life in his reminiscences and some of his shorter stories. To-day, when France is beginning to flounder in the bog of alcoholism, which some of her neighbours reached before her, it is to be hoped that such a tale as he called "The Monkey" has not escaped the perusal of "the ruling ten thousand." It may be called "A workman's Saturday Night in Paris"; and here is a translation for the benefit of English readers.

It is Saturday,—*pay*-day. On the Saturday night, which ends the week, you can feel the day of rest approaching. The whole length of the suburb is resounding with cries and shouts, and the tavern doors are in continual motion. The

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crowd of workmen overflows the pavement and pours down the steep street, up which, against the torrent, a slim little woman comes, dodging her way dexterously among the men. She seems wretched and ashamed, anxious to escape notice and yet unable to stop, driven on in spite of herself. Her thin shawl is pulled tightly round her shoulders, and her pinched face looks out of a bonnet far too big. Where is she going? What is she seeking?

Her hurried step and fixed and anxious look seem to say, "if only I'm in time." Men turn to watch and chaff her. They know her, every one of them, and greet her familiar ugliness with as ugly a name. "Hillo! There's Valentine's monkey looking for her man." Then they egg her on. "Hist! Hist! She'll catch him! She'll catch him! No, she won't!"

On she goes, unheeding, as if she did not hear; wearied and breathless, for the road is steep. At last she reaches the factory at the top of it, just as the gates are being closed. There is a noise like that of a locomotive when it stops in the railway station at the end of its journey—a noise of steam blowing off. There is still a little smoke from the chimney stalks, and a shimmering of hot air over the deserted buildings like the last

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breath of the finished work. The only light still visible inside is what shines on the street through the grated window of the counting-house; and that light is extinguished at the moment she arrives. Too late! The wages have been paid!

What is she to do now? Where is she to find him to get his week's pay before he can drink it? The money is so badly needed at home. The children have no stockings. The baker is not paid. . . . She leans a while on a post, dead beat, looking vaguely into the darkness, without the force to move.

The taverns of the suburb are overflowing with light and noise. All the life of the deserted factories has been poured into them. Through the dim window-panes can be seen the rows of bottles with their treacherous colours, the poisonous green of absinthe, the rosy-red of bitters, and the golden gleams of Danzig whisky. Shouts and songs reach the street, and the clinking of glasses, and the jingle of money flung on the counters by hands still black with the work that earned it. On the tables men are resting their wearied elbows, paralysed and brutalized by fatigue. In the unwholesome heat of the place the wretches forget that their own

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fireplaces are empty and their wives and children cold.

The low windows of the taverns are the only lighted spots in the deserted streets. In front of them the slim little woman is passing and repassing timidly. . . . Poor "Monkey,"—still looking for her man! . . . She goes from one to another; leans against a window, furtively wipes a corner of the glass with her shawl and peeps in; then moves to the next, restless, feverish, and begins again. Suddenly she starts! There is her Valentine facing her! He is a fine figure of a man in his white blouse, strong and supple, proud of himself and with cause to be proud, as he tosses his curly hair and jovially harangues the men who crowd around him and listen to him. He is worth hearing; and, besides, he is paying for the drinks. . . . Meanwhile, the poor "monkey" is shivering outside, pressing her face against the glass that reflects in the gaslight the table where her husband sits carousing, a table laden with bottles and glasses, and surrounded by merry faces.

If seen from the inside she would appear like one of the party—a living reproach. But Valentine is not looking in that direction. Drowned in the eternal tavern talks that start

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afresh with every glass, and are almost as bad for the brain as the adulterated wines, he does not see the sad eyes trying to catch his—the haggard, little face beckoning to him through the window. She dare not enter. To enter and fetch him away before his companions would affront him. It might have been different if she had been good-looking, but she is not. She is so plain!

She was not always so plain. What a fresh little lady she was when they first became acquainted! That was ten years ago. As he went to his work every morning he met her going to hers. She was poor but respectable; dainty and even fine, as fine as cheap ribbons and flowers could make her. They fell in love at sight; but for a long time the want of cash made them delay to marry. Then his mother gave them one mattress and hers gave another. The girls she worked with liked her and made a collection; and that was how the young couple commenced house-keeping.

A friend lent her the wedding-dress. They hired a veil from a hairdresser, and set out one morning and walked to church. There they had to wait till some funeral masses in progress were finished; and at the Mayor's office they had to give way to a richer couple. But wedded they

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were ; and away to the top of the suburb he took her, to a dull room at the end of a long lobby, the last of a long double row of dull rooms, dirty and full of noises, the noises of incessant squabbles. That was the kind of dwelling to make home repulsive from the start. They contrived to be happy in spite of it ; but their happiness did not last long.

By living with drunkards, he was gradually led into drinking as they did. She saw the other women weeping helplessly, and so she lost heart. While he was haunting the taverns she was dawdling among her neighbours, apathetic, spiritless, and peevishly whining, even to the very child she had in her arms. That was how she grew ugly, and came to be called a "monkey" in the workshops.

She walked up and down there in front of the tavern. Her step on the pavement might be heard inside ; so might her hollow cough, for the night was wet and cold. How long was she to wait ? Two or three times already she had put her hand to the door without daring to open it. The thought of her starving children made her desperate at last, and in she went, and was greeted at the very threshold by a great burst of laughter. "Valentine, behold the monkey!"

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She, certainly, was not a beauty as she stood there in her dripping rags, haggard with the weary waiting and bodily weakness.

"The monkey, Valentine, behold the monkey!" Shivering like one forbidden, she stood as if fixed to the spot. Up he rose in a rage. What! She had dared to seek him there, and disgrace him before his companions. "Wait! Wait! You'll see!" . . .

With clenched fist he sprang towards her, and the wretched woman escaped him only by running through the hooting crowd out into the darkness. He went through the doorway after her, and in a few steps caught her at the first street corner. It was a black night, and nobody was passing. Poor Monkey!

Ah, well—no! Away from his companions the Paris workman is not a bad fellow at all. Once he was face to face with her, he was weak and submissive, almost repentant. Home they go together arm-in-arm, and as they go farther and farther away, it is the voice of the woman you hear rising in the night, fierce and plaintive, hoarse with tears. The monkey is taking her revenge!

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which follows, as the night the day, the "betterment" of the individual. Deterioration follows inevitably the same law. This is one of the best justifications of the refusal to admit immigrants into any country, unless they are clearly equal to the country's average.

Suppose the extreme Socialists were victorious at the polls in such an overwhelming way that their new Utopia began at once. Less than a year would suffice to renovate our social structure. Without any violence it could be done in a year. But character is a living thing, and not to be changed in a hurry or at will; and what is true of one is true in manifold measure of the multitude of men and women. The minds and hearts of the people, therefore, would remain as they were, and for that very reason alone it is certain that on the morrow morning of the New Era the social evils which make life horrible now would reappear, most of them immediately, and none of them long delayed. Our law courts and shops and changes are far too much arranged so as to make cheating and gambling easy. We should be fortunate, indeed, if any attempt at Utopia did not make them worse, for the ugliest trait in the Socialist, as well as in the priestly fanatic when he takes to humbug, is a practical indiffer-

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ence to veracity in speech and to righteousness in conduct.

On the other hand, if only a little more honesty were imported into the business of life, even the hideous social entanglements of modern Europe would cease to make men mad. In a great measure our confusions are directly due to the want of common honesty. In every part they would begin to disappear before it. Sunshine is the best of disinfectants, morally as well as physically. Before any formal change could be made, the sunshine would be felt. As the life is more than the meat, and the body more than the raiment, so the spirit of man cannot be shackled altogether by any social arrangements, good or bad, and the fires of the spirit give forth light and heat abundantly. The victims of social injustice would be set upon their feet as a matter of course, and the miserable whining of humanity—discordant, repellent, would begin to abate, if only there were a little more honesty among us. What an *if!* But let none despair. What little honesty we have is all that stands between us and confusion worse than our own—the confusion of cannibal kings, the kind of thing that once was universal on the Earth, and may yet be seen in corners of Polynesia and certain parts of Africa.

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All this has long been realized in every country in Europe by men of superior intellect; but everywhere it is vehemently disbelieved by the mobs, Socialist and clerical alike. These poor creatures are plunged in medieval delusions in the twentieth century, and amid the blaze of noon remain unutterably dark, the fated victims of rogues and quacks. For who can teach them?

If only this ode of Béranger were taught to the young (and to help this in England the translator has adhered to the original rhythm, so that the English version also can be sung to the fine old French air of *Alleluia*), then one might hope that in another generation every schoolboy here would know what, thanks to Confucius, has long been known to every schoolboy in China—the great truth that the improvement of the individual character is in all human affairs the one thing needful, and in particular the indispensable condition precedent of political improvement.

"My friends, a light's vouchsafed my eyes,
I see our Earthly Paradise!
The good time coming, I can see—
So let it be!

No poets flatter mobs or kings,
For flattery now no profit brings:
And orators talk truthfully—
So let it be!

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No money-bags can play the Turk;
On change, at sports, no gamblers work;
And lady-clerks speak civilly—
So let it be!

True friendship charms the cares of life;
And every man can trust his wife,
And fears not bills for dress to see—
So let it be!

Our writers show in all they've writ
More genius and less would-be-wit,
And use plain English properly.
So let it be!

No authors now with truth dispense;
Some actors learn a little sense;
E'en critics practise courtesy—
So let it be!

Of rich and great we can make sport;
No jester now is haled to Court,
And none deserves it, seemingly—
So let it be!

Both snobbery and cant are dead,
And social justice reigns instead;
And one and all work willingly—
So let it be!

Now, friends, let's all bless God's own grace,
For He keeps all things right in place
And these in *thirtieth* century—
So let it be!"

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XIX

NORTON ON ROOSEVELT AND OTHERS IN 1895

(An American Prophet who had Faith in the Republic)

1. ALL MEN ARE PROPHETS

"Prophecy," it has been said, "is the most gratuitous form of mistake." To make the saying accurate, it needs the qualification—if it is avoidable. That is almost as much as to say—if it is gratuitous. Much virtue in an *if!* The Duke of Wellington told Mr Croker, "The whole art of war consists in guessing at what is on the other side of the hill." What is that but prophesying what will be found there? It is the same in politics and every other business. If one could really discover how far a man's expectations corresponded to the events, one would need no other test of his capacity.

"Man looks before and after," and of all the virtues, prudence, real prudence, is the most human and the most profitable. None can dis-

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pense with it. There is not a day of any man's life when he does not prophesy in words to others, or in silence to himself. "Walk quicker or you'll miss the train," says one to another in the morning, prophesying as he can. "If I go faster, I'll get blown and be uncomfortable," thinks the listener, prophesying to himself.

"Never prophesy unless you know" is like saying, "Never shoot unless you're sure to hit." It is natural to feel like that at times. Who would not be tempted to forswear shooting after making a lot of bad misses? But it is better to say what Frederick the Great said after a beating—"We'll do better another time." Shooting, however, is one of the many things which you can give up if you like; but prophecy is like breathing. You can never cease to prophesy until you cease to be a man. The more you know and the more you do, the more you will have to prophesy. The world is alive in every atom, and we, its manikins, are among the liveliest of its bits; and from the earliest dawn of life and light till the last dark eclipse, it keeps us guessing. Forward, then, and look! It is by looking into the dark that the pilot sees his way.

These remarks are needed to prepare Brother Jonathan for news that might otherwise be over-

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startling. In 1895 I met in Boston a remarkable man, who in conversation made a number of political forecasts which events have justified. His name was Charles Elliot Norton.

Euripides expressed the general opinion and a common experience when he wrote :—

> "The gods still bring to pass the unforeseen ;
> And what we look for never comes at all."

So, surely, for the credit of human nature as well as the glory of America, the most remarkable exception to that rule which I have ever known deserves to be recorded.

2. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

I HAD gone to Boston for no other purpose than to hear what he would tell me about Thomas Carlyle, and most of our talks concerned our hero ; but Carlyle was such a man that talking of him was like talking of things in general.

Thus it was that, apropos of him, I was led to repeat conversation with a fellow-passenger on the voyage to New York. He was manager of one of the biggest corporations in that city, and, finding my trade was the administration of justice, he told me a trick his people had had to endure. A scoundrel sued them, and tipped the process-

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server. So there was an *ex-parte* decree against them before they knew there was a suit. The scoundrel's next move was to offer to accept in payment less than it would cost them to get the fraudulent decree cancelled; and for not paying him they were fiercely attacked in the newspapers.

I could match this from a little court in Burma, and we compared notes for hours. He had more and worse to tell, and we were interested to find how much alike the tricks of rascals were in East and West, from the process-server delivering a belated summons, and slightly mistaking the time and manner of service, up to the judge falsifying the record. New York could beat Pegu! Then I fell back on India, the "land of regrets," and he had to admit I scored. "But I think we could make a Hindu feel at home in some of our southern States," said the New Yorker. "And there is no chance of a man like yourself being allowed to sweep the dirt out of any of our courts and let in light and air."

We were passing the Liberty statue soon afterwards; and as I gazed at that big wild woman getting out of bed with her hair in curl papers, I thought her a fit emblem of the chaotic city beside her.

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3. JOINING ISSUE

THESE were also the sentiments of the man of business, and of so many others that I was taken aback to see that Norton differed. He hinted that every bureaucrat had not a horror of rascality. I declared it the rule among Europeans in India. "It's the labour of Sisyphus to keep rogues straight," said he. "It's our business," I said, "what we're paid for; and it's indispensable to the prosperity of the Empire. It's a daily need, like making bread."

"It's more like a major operation," said he. "Prevention is better than cure. What is needed is to have no judges that cannot be trusted. They should be living examples of equity."

"The Lord Chancellor in Gilbert's play thought as you do when he sang:—

> "'The Law's the true embodiment
> Of everything that's excellent;
> It has no kind of fault or flaw;
> And I, my Lords, embody the Law!'

That is in England, however. You don't seem to manage it here."

"How much the English have improved of late!"

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I forget the details of the chaff that followed. I gathered that the higher courts were as good as ours, but also that my New Yorker's indictment was possibly a true bill. "Things are at times, perhaps, as bad as in India, if possible."

"And isn't it disgusting that white men are no better?"

"So it is. It is a pity."

How did we keep the subordinate courts in India straight? I could not say we did, but we tried. My own experience was of Burma; and though the people of that country are as truthful and honest as any in the world, its officials have a bad name. "We minimize the evil by encouraging complaints," I said.

"Ah, all of you?" There was a smile that seemed to hint, "how green you are and fresh in this old world!"

"Most of us," I insisted; but he shook his head, as if reluctantly, and asked, "Anything else?"

"A few honest lawyers are a check."

"Of course they would be. Have you any such?"

I described one, old Van Someren. He is dead since then, and graced with an epitaph his ghost would like, though it is not on his tomb.

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So let it be printed that we may give honour where honour is due.

> "Here sleeps old Van, a spirit rare!
> Wherever he may be,
> Whatever is the climate there,
> There's splendid company."

He once delivered as fine a speech as ever was spoken in a law-court. It was reported to me by others, and I think confirmed by himself. "I don't mind you giving cases against me when it's right you should; but in this case you know you shouldn't; and if you don't, you know why you don't; AND SO DO I; and I'll make a mess of you." He won that case, and deserved to win it, for it was not bluff or silly suspicion, such as afterwards inspired a poor fellow who imitated him. I heard what "Van" could have proved. He could have kept his word. He was a very good-natured man, and this outburst was exceptional. He was described as in a royal rage at the time, with a countenance that made his clerk afraid of apoplexy. I could well believe it.

Mr. Norton seemed to think the mere existence of such a man a better safeguard than any bureaucracy.

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"But there would be no scope for him under your system. In Burma, if he attacked the subordinate judge in the Court of Appeal, the judges there could hold an inquiry, if they liked."

"What an *if!*"

"If they didn't, the Chief Commissioner could order it, and even if no criminal offence could be proved, if the judge seemed merely incompetent or open to suspicion, he might be reduced or removed. And they say it's no use complaining to the higher courts here, or to anybody else," I added triumphantly. "Every judge and magistrate here does what is right in his own eyes."

"Better that than do what is right in the eyes of the authorities," said Norton, with an emphasis that made me sit up. We set to work, I to convince him how much better it would be for America to have a strong central government, and he to convince me that least government is best government, and that it is best for judges and magistrates to be locally chosen and responsible direct to those who chose them.

He was far from approving the spoils system. He would have had judges and civil servants carefully selected and appointed for long periods.

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His point was that the Americans were on the right lines, and that improvement, if they persevered, was as certain as gravitation. In a free state the officials would tend to rise to the top level of public opinion, "as surely as a cork in water tends to the surface," was my way of summarizing his argument to myself afterwards.

How far I succeeded in persuading him of the manifold and manifest blessings of bureaucracy I never knew; nor could I even have told how far he succeeded in persuading me of the contrary. Only, I felt my "Imperialism," after our argument, like a shaky tooth in the jaw—too important to take out, if one can help it, but fit for little immediate use.

4. PROSPERITY AND DECADENCE

NOTHING would be easier than to spin out my recollections of these conversations into a dialogue like Plato's, but I have no such ambition. I was making notes of his talk, and he knew and approved my doing so, and left my discretion unfettered; but I confined my immediate notes to what concerned Carlyle. By the time I thought of noting the rest it was too late to

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make the record complete. I once thought of filling in the gaps and sending the paper to him for correction, but shrank from bothering him with MSS. I hoped to see him again and talk it over, but accident delayed me, and Fate has now made completion impossible. Accuracy is more important than symmetry. Readers must be content with what can be recalled with confidence.

It may console them to know that they would have found a short-hand verbatim report elliptical. We took a great deal for granted, including all the best historians, and agreed in a kind of pious opportunism, like that of Oliver Cromwell. Results were the one and only test of methods, always allowing for the imperfections of the record. On the other hand, we had no fancy definitions. Old Plutarch's sufficed us: "The government is held in common and the magistrates chosen from among all the citizens." We saw no difference between that and the popular and reasonable description of it as government of the people *by* the people and *for* the people. What Norton undertook to vindicate was the actual American Republic. What is best for America to-day? That concrete question was the only one. Abstract discussions seemed mere

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logic-chopping, and we were trying to solve a practical problem by a candid consideration of facts.

His argument was remarkably like that of M. Demolins in *A-t-on intérêt à s'emparer du pouvoir*, or, *Is Political Power Worth Having?* Readers who have it handy and wish to see the line he took, should refer to that book, but for the satisfaction of others a few notes may be given. The ingenious French writer gives the Anglo-Saxons credit for a certain superiority over his countrymen, and attributes it to the prevalence of private initiative. The trade of an official he finds demoralizing, because the official is always evading responsibility and doing as little as possible, so that in time he ceases to be able to exert himself properly, and cannot do it if he tries. Unlike Norton, M. Demolins looked little outside Europe, and so he failed to distinguish between the habits of communal life and those of political parasites. He also was more prone than Norton to attribute effects to political causes. But the general likeness between their arguments was such that the Frenchman, who wrote long afterwards, might have been his pupil, and if Norton had been lecturing to students on what we discussed he might have been content to use

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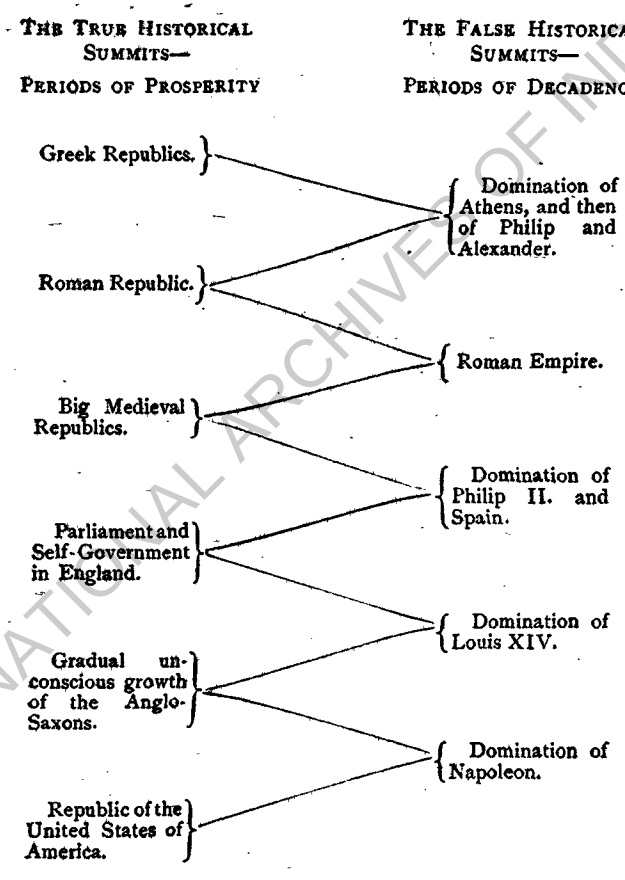
a diagram that figures in the French book. He made a wider sweep, but came to the same conclusion. Here is the diagram :—


THE TRUE HISTORICAL SUMMITS—
PERIODS OF PROSPERITY
THE FALSE HISTORICAL SUMMITS—
PERIODS OF DECADENCE
Greek Republics.
Roman Republic.
Big Medieval Republics.
Parliament and Self-Government in England.
Gradual unconscious growth of the Anglo-Saxons.
Republic of the United States of America.
Domination of Athens, and then of Philip and Alexander.
Roman Empire.
Domination of Philip II. and Spain.
Domination of Louis XIV.
Domination of Napoleon.

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5. IMPERIALISM

I WAS an Imperialist by conviction as well as by trade in 1895, when Imperialism was not so common as it is to-day. In a recent admirable speech Lord Cromer contrasted the true and the false kinds of it, the true Imperialist in power behaving like a trustee, and the other being selfish. Norton's point was that the false and selfish Imperialism was bound to prevail. I cannot recall his exact words, only his meaning. Superior men cannot be organized. An ordinary official was simply an ordinary man, without an ordinary man's motives for exertion, and with more than an ordinary man's temptation to falsehood. He forecasted the developments Lord Cromer deplored, which have made the Imperialism of the twentieth century like the patriotism of the eighteenth, "the last refuge of a scoundrel."

A curious inference might be drawn from his premises, which neither he nor I heeded at the time. The same objections might be made to Socialism as to Imperialism. The organized world of our imagination has all the defects of an empire, with the hideous addition that there would be no escape from it, which alone is enough

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to turn the prettiest Socialist day-dream into a kind of nightmare.'

6. A CANDID ADMISSION

"WHY do none of your honourable young men, who have bread and butter safe, fling themselves into politics?" I asked.

"They would not be elected," said he, simply.

"Then all the talk about 'never in prison nor in politics' is cant? A mere calling of the grapes sour?"

"In general, yes. Assuredly there are many honourable men who would gladly seek a political career without an eye to money-making, but cannot succeed in being elected."

The candour of this is much less apparent when it is thus jotted down by itself than when it was spoken; for he was telling me a fact I did not know which told against his own argument.

7. RUDYARD KIPLING

"TELL me about Kipling," said he. "What do you think of him?"

I liked Kipling, but resented his sneers at the ladies, saying, "I know a lady who said he never knew what a lady was like."

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"Few of us do," said Norton, and I agreed. It is indeed as hard for a man to understand a woman's spirit as for a painter to represent the sun; and there is always something about the sun which makes you forget his spots.

"But Kipling is dirty," said I. "One might apply to himself what he somewhere says of a nasty-minded woman—'she talked to her ayah.'"

"Had *he* an ayah?"

"Not as a man; but he was a child in India, and must have had one then. He seems to have swallowed as gospel a lot of smutty stories such as they say that ayahs tell."

"Then you admit his sincerity?"

"Yes, I do; and in fairness ought to say that I never set foot in an Indian hill-station in my life."

"Ah! ah! Kipling probably knew what he was talking about."

Norton was little concerned about female frailties, as such. But were the women and the dandies able to have this or that man sent to this or that post, or promoted or the reverse? He seemed to relish making me defend my country-women, as I was prompt to do, declaring that nearly all of them were like the American misses seeking "a good time," whom one sees on the Continent,

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idle and spoiled, perhaps, occasionally, but straight by instinct. There were lots of things to explain in an innocent way the charm of India for a gentle mind. At the mention of the decorations the women adore, the fine gold braid two inches wide, the resplendent uniforms, civil and military, the trappings of elephants, the medals and the stars, and all the multitudinous splendours that made the Viceroyalty like a Lord Mayor's show, the stern Republican sincerely smiled.

8. VICEROY AND OTHERS

IN praising Dufferin and Elgin, I mentioned that Lady Dufferin left behind some expensive dresses she had got just before going to India.

"Why?"

"To set an example of modest living, and help to keep officers' wives out of temptation to extravagance. That was the tradition of the Viceroys, as Dufferin said to a man who told me."

"And Elgin does likewise?"

"Yes, more than people want."

This seemed to strike him as the best thing he had heard of the Indian empire.

Here, perhaps, a note should be inserted by way of postscript. The glory of departing decisively

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from that homely tradition is one of Lord Curzon's titles to fame.

This was not the only set-off to Kipling's insinuations about petticoat influence. I had to tell how, having myself gone east from curiosity rather than the more usual motives of piety, dullness or debts, and being free from the itch of ambition and so easily impartial and observant, and forewarned never to expect to see among Europeans in the Tropics anything but the usual sordid phenomena of degeneration, I had nevertheless been greatly and agreeably surprised by Sir Charles Crossthwaite, an effective, ruddy little Irish-Englishman, one of Dufferin's best selections. It was he who disentangled the revolting mess that had been made of the "conquest" of Burma. He was a plain, strong, sensible man, more like Frederick William, the father of Frederick the Great, than anybody else I had ever seen. Some anecdotes were told. Though an official and Chief Commissioner, Sir Charles was quite truthful and straightforward. Whatever lies seemed indispensable he made his secretaries tell, exactly in the style of Carlyle's Frederick William. "I won't keep dogs and bark myself," he said to one who repeated it to me.

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Norton listened with evident pleasure, and told me of similar men he had known in obscurer posts in India. He seemed to think that the Indian Civil Service had made its name as the best bureaucracy in the world because it was not a bureaucracy at all, but an association of men who could trust each other, and, each in his place on the spot, could see what was what and deal with each difficulty as it arose. "But is not serious work like theirs at a discount to-day?"

I contended that the Europeans in India were like an army and must be centralized. As Napoleon told the Paris Directorate, when they tried to give him a colleague in Italy: "Even one bad general is better than two that are both good."

For military purposes he thought the whole elaborate officialdom together not worth the wing of a regiment; and he declined to admit any real analogy between an army on active service and civil work. The land laws should differ from district to district, as the people's customs differed, and the uniform Penal Code seemed ridiculous.

My admission that if a rich man kicked a poor man and was prosecuted anywhere in the Empire, he could have the case talked about in the higher courts, and finally carried to the provincial capital

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on appeal or revision, seemed to convince him that I was far too sanguine about our judicial administration. Every opening for an appeal gives a chance for money to tell, and the abuses of criminal appeal in America I did not know till he told me. He thought our ways no better.

"There are not in India such millionaires to deflect the laws."

"Neither are there in America such paupers."

In short, our elaborate system of centralized authority appeared to him a dangerous experiment. It was certainly not the method by which the Indian Civil Service had pacified India. It might appear all right as long as there were men like Sir Charles Crossthwaite and Dufferin and Elgin atop, men full of common sense, and intent on minimizing strain in all directions; but, "wait, only wait till the next headlong fool comes along. You've had one or two already, and can't deny the possibility. See what will happen then!" . . .

In this connexion I may allude to a simile that occurred to me as we talked, as an illustration of his argument. The Anglo-Indian empire, which is a dependency of the British navy as much as the island of St Helena, was not unlike the Fall River steamer, in which I had come to Fall River, on the way from New York to Boston. It was a

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palatial boat, with spacious decks; and compared to other river steamers, it seemed a sky-scraper afloat, till it was dwarfed by the Brooklyn Bridge, below which it passed. Our sleeping-rooms were more like hotel bedrooms than cabins. Two bands were playing at once, without interfering with each other. There was room for a third; and there was room to escape from them all. On the uppermost deck, as I stood looking at the stars, the distant hum underfoot was like what the city sends to the top of St Paul's. The interior decorations reminded me of a yacht that was built on the Clyde for the Czar of Russia. Yet the big steamer was fit to navigate only in backwaters. Any moderate storm on the open sea would have sunk it to the "low lands low."

9. THE LIMITATIONS OF KINGS AND OTHERS

AT some point of our argument allusion was implied rather than made to two famous passages in Montesquieu and Gibbon. Of course we did not need to quote them; but to do so now may let readers see our drift, and eke out the gaps in this fragmentary report.

Montesquieu wrote (*Spirit of Laws*, iii. 5):—

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"In monarchies the art of politics lies in getting great things done with as little virtue as possible. . . . Let nobody be offended by this. I am only repeating what all historians tell. I know very well that virtuous princes are not rare; but what I do say is that in a monarchy it is very difficult for the people to be virtuous.

"Read what historians of every age have written upon the courts of kings; recall what men of every country have said about the wretched character of courtiers; these are not matters of speculation but of melancholy experience.

"Ambition combined with slackness, meanness with pride; the craving to grow rich without work, the antipathy to truth; flattery, trickery and treachery; heedlessness of every engagement; contempt for the duties of a citizen; fear of a prince's good qualities and hope from his weaknesses; and more than anything else the eternal ridicule of righteousness; these I believe to be the characteristics of most courtiers in every country and at every epoch. Now it is very difficult for the leading men in a state to be knaves and the inferior sort to be honest, for the leaders to be cheats and the others content to continue dupes.

"Even if there should chance to be someone

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unlucky enough to be honest among the subjects of a king, Cardinal Richelieu, in his political testament, insinuates that the King should take care not to employ such a man."

The other passage is in chapter xiii. of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, and refers to Diocletian, one of the ablest men that ever were emperors :—

"In his conversations with his friends, he frequently acknowledged that, of all arts, the most difficult was the art of reigning; and he expressed himself on that favourite topic with a degree of warmth which could be the result only of experience. 'How often,' was he accustomed to say, 'is it the interest of four or five ministers to combine together to deceive their sovereign! Secluded from mankind by his exalted dignity, the truth is concealed from his knowledge; he can see only with their eyes, he hears nothing but their misrepresentations. He confers the most important offices upon vice and weakness, and disgraces the most virtuous and deserving among his subjects. By such infamous arts,' added Diocletian, 'the best and wisest princes are sold to the venal corruption of their courtiers.'"

It may be remembered that in 1905 a letter

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from Tolstoi went round the world, in which he put his finger on the Czar's difficulty. "You will reply . . . that he can choose disinterested and good people. Unfortunately the Czar cannot do this, because he knows only a few score of individuals who have approached him accidentally, or through various intrigues, and who carefully screen him from all those who might replace them. . . ."

If Tolstoi had not in mind the words of Diocletian, the coincidence is curious, but easily explained. The facts are obvious.

It should, however, be added that while insisting on the evils inherent in any approximation to government by "courts," Norton was emphatic in recognizing the good work done in India by men "in the districts." "Courts," I say, for in India, besides the viceregal court, we have many of humbler degree—I forget how many.

I could not induce him to believe that anybody had confidence in judges chosen from and by executive officers. It is the Russian way, and incompatible with judicial impartiality. Men of the Civil Service, in particular, were unfit for judicial employment, except as magistrates on the spot. How could they lay aside the habits

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of a lifetime, and after working for promotion for a quarter of a century, obedient to the men above them, become suddenly impartial and unbiased? To make judges of such men was violating the fundamental maxim that a judge should have no connexion with either side. We might be sure that no non-official forgot that. It was elementary common sense. He seemed ready to approve of the nomination of English judges in India being vested in the Inns of Court, and native ones elected on the spot. But he was like Confucius in this respect that what he specially craved for was to see litigation minimized and as few judges needed as possible. That would certainly be the result of the restrictions on appeals he seemed to desire. I told him of miscarriages of justice corrected by the Privy Council. Shocked as he was at the wrong decisions, he declined to admit them to be any justification for having a Court of Appeal in London to hear lawsuits from India.

"Get better judges," was the effect of his remarks. "Let things be put right on the spot somehow. Judges who blunder like that should be relieved of their duties." I thought of Frederick William's cudgel on the crowns of the judges of Berlin, and recognized that American republicanism, in Norton's mind, had

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something of the temper of Cromwell. His boundless faith in "law" did not extend to lawyers, or even to statutes; and indeed it must surely be confessed that both lawyers and legislators are, as much as kings and emperors, subject to the limitations of humanity.

10. DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE

THE question being whether less corruption would be found in the public business of America if there were a centralized government, I thought victory for me a certainty at first; and so it might have been in a public argument, even in America. Talleyrand defined democracy as an aristocracy of blackguards; and many respectable Americans in 1895 were talking as if that were a correct description of their own government. But discussing the question quietly in the study, one had to ask oneself how much better were the rulers of France during the long reign of the Regent and Louis XV.? Were the men of war and religion who served Louis XIV. any better than the blackguards of the Revolution? From days still earlier the satire *Ménippée* survives to hold the mirror up to Nature; and other documents confirm it.

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The French Republic may not have been well governed between 1870 and 1895; but when in all its history had France done better? The evils choking it, the debts, the swarms of officials and the murderous taxes were mostly a legacy of the kingdoms and empires. Nothing in the history of the Republic could equal in horror the "dry guillotine" of "Napoleon the Little," to go no farther back.

If the faults of the French Republic were due to the surviving bad habits of Imperialism (or the depravity of human nature, as I said), the merits of the German administration were attributable to "particularism" (or efficient bureaucracy, said I).

I had to admit that Germany was not yet an "empire" like that of Napoleon, but rather a federation. Nevertheless, so much was the central method the better that it was becoming an empire in the strictest sense; and I insisted on the honesty and efficiency of the German bureaucrats. The very Socialists did not seek any decentralization. Norton thought that that just showed their want of sense, and that deterioration was certain if centralization took place. If I may paraphrase his thought, not in order to improve it, but only because I cannot recall his expressions, he thought better of the Germans than to impute

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the honesty of their officials to the machine. They remained honest men in spite of being officials, and they found that easier than the French found it, because they were not centralized so much.

I could not deny the demoralizing tendency of the vagabond life of the normal official; and the compensations I suggested were not admitted.

To urge America to learn from empires anything but "how not to do it" was to be like the fox that lost its tail and advised the other foxes to cut off theirs. (Either I suggested this comparison at the time and he accepted it, or else I thought of it to recall his argument afterwards. Mr Kipling may be interested to know that the next quotation was Norton's.) Suppose the Americans were to set up "little tin gods" to play at potentates at Washington. Would not the "little tin gods" behave there as the same kind of creatures behaved elsewhere? Of course they would.

11. DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA

NORTON did not dispute the corruptibility of human nature. Men tend to do what is easiest as surely as the waters tend to the sea.

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So our question resolved itself into this: Is rascality more likely to pay under a democratic regime than under some other kind? It seemed as if all the other kinds might be collectively contrasted with democracy.

Nowhere in the world were the wicked so prosperous as in America, it seemed to me, but Norton was not so ready to admit this as other Americans had been, and he had various explanations for what he did admit.

The great natural resources of the country that were being opened up made many American enterprises profitable beyond the dreams of Europe. The loose form of government gave elbow-room to good men as well as to bad. Protection attracted rogues to politics. The same kind of men kept out of politics in England because there was so little money to be made in that way there. "Try Protection again, and you'll see!"

America was not so corrupt as it was called, and the drawbacks of democracy were compensated by the very publicity which made people think it so bad. The public detestation of its faults secured their correction, sooner or later. He reiterated and emphasized this.

"Publicity alone is not always enough," I said,

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quoting Molière's "one has leave to be a rascal openly," and perhaps alluding to Roman emperors, naked, brutal, cruel and unashamed.

But when things become unbearable under a democracy, people can get reform without revolution; whereas, in France, under Louis XIV., there was nothing to be done but grin and bear it.

"Is not that exactly what you are doing here now?"

"Not altogether."

Then followed a dialogue which, unlike all the rest, stands mostly clear-cut and distinct in memory from start to finish.

12. THEODORE ROOSEVELT

AFTER a short silence Norton suddenly asked, "Have you any *honest* politician now in England?"

It was enough to take one's breath away, but I saw his point. "You mean *honest* in Carlyle's sense?"

"Of course."

Now, an honest politician in Carlyle's sense was a man who told no lies at all and never subordinated the public good to his private

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interests. To such a man the "measuring square" of Confucius might be applied, for he behaves to others as in like circumstances he would have them behave to him. In Hazlitt's phrase, his sense of right and wrong is stronger than his desire that others should think well of him. Oliver Cromwell is our greatest politician of that type.

I said that in the commercial sense our leading politicians were generally conspicuous in a wicked world for being honest. We could even boast of a lawyer who had refused to be Lord Chancellor, at the price of a little sacrifice of conscience. But that did not answer his question, nor was it to the point to mention superior men in other businesses. I did not attempt that, for we were discussing politics.

"I mean any man now in politics and likely to come to the front as Premier, or at least as Cabinet Minister."

I groped all round, trying several, and feeling like a drowning man clutching straws. W. E. Forster was my nearest approach to a success. I had a fine anecdote of that honest man, known fully only to myself, and must have told it to Norton, though I cannot now be sure that I recollect doing so. Here it is, still worth telling

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for its own sake. Forster is the kind of politician that is worth remembering.

It was in the early eighties that I was secretary of the Glasgow University Liberal Club, and the committee had to choose the Liberal candidate for the Lord Rectorship. It was about the time of the great crisis in Forster's career. He had been in Glasgow not long before then, and some of us had seen and heard him, and admired him as a transparently straightforward man. Our candidate was sure of success, if we chose a good one; and that the election of Forster then and there would have mattered to him politically was curiously elicited in the wrestle over the choice in committee. Our president was a fluent Nonconformist Welshman, of the numerous tribe of Jones (not the present Professor of Morals, but another man). He was fanatically opposed to Forster, and might have prevailed in his opposition if we had not discovered that he had been calling on Chamberlain on the strength of his presidency of the Liberal Club. Chamberlain, of course, disapproved of Forster, and Jones was so surprised to be asked what promises Chamberlain had made to him, that he began telling something and then stopped. The secretary was cynical enough to quote the maxim, that what a man

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refuses to tell must be presumed to be against him; and then he told, poor Jones, but nobody believed him. The committee, all but unanimously, directed me to offer the nomination to Forster.

He at once accepted, with expressions of pleasure.

A few days later I received a letter from him, rather scolding me, and telling me that as the Tory committee had chosen the Marquis of Bute because he had given £40,000 to the University, it was the duty of our committee to do likewise and make it a unanimous election.

What he did not know was that the previous office-bearers of the Liberal Club had tried to do that, and made the matter a question of confidence when the committee went against them. Jones had been made president, and I, secretary, expressly to get a good candidate to fight against Bute. A victory over Bute, in spite of his personal claims, would have had extra political éclat; and victory was certain for us if Forster would stand. But Forster was as deaf to arguments of political expediency as of personal interest. He insisted on retiring from the candidature which his enemies had been so anxious to hinder us from offering to him. No doubt he reckoned on his retirement securing

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Bute's election, and so it would have done if the correspondence had been made public. But I asked the committee to take my word for it that Forster was now impossible, and they agreed. So I kept the letters a secret, and the Tories obtained no advantage from Forster's magnanimity. Jones and I buried the hatchet, and joined in choosing Mr Fawcett, and carried him triumphantly.

Norton seemed to know and appreciate Forster as a man who had been honest through and through, but Forster was dead, and I knew no other like him in English politics in 1895. I looked to see if this exhausted the significance of Norton's question, but it seemed that there was more behind.

"Perhaps, in a century or two, it might be possible to ask such a question in America without offence?"

"I hope so; and even now, if you like!"

"Now?"

"Yes, now!"

"Ask for an honest politician in Carlyle's sense in the United States?"

"Yes!"

"A candidate, I suppose, not likely to be elected; but you asked me for a man in the front rank *now*, an actuality, not a possibility."

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"Quite so."

"Is there any such man in American politics?"

"Yes!"

"Elected?"

"Elected."

"Some Cato in Congress or the Senate, I suppose. Will he ever be tolerated in practical affairs?"

"Not willingly by machine politicians; but there he is, a concrete vindication of popular methods. Theodore Roosevelt is his name, and he is now Commissioner of Police in New York."

"In New York, of all places?"

"In New York."

"Actually ruling the police, with real control of them?"

"Yes."

If he had told me that the news had come from the observatory that old Mother Earth was preparing to take a final dive into the fiery bosom of the sun, I could not have been more surprised. I inquired how the police bore the loss of their perquisites, and received a detailed account of Roosevelt's career up to date, which it is superfluous to repeat.

It was refreshing to see how pleased Norton was to have such a tale to tell. Seldom indeed

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can it have been possible in any country for a man of his years and culture to esteem so highly any young contemporary. Somewhat irrelevantly I questioned the use of the liquor laws that Roosevelt was enforcing. That did not matter, as he was Commissioner of Police and not Governor and Legislature. Norton said in effect: "I don't even know whether he approves of the liquor laws. What everybody can know for certain is that, as long as he is in charge of the police, the laws that have been passed will be enforced."

For the information of people in England it ought to be mentioned that in America there are many politicians in favour of Acts but against the enforcing of them. Hence arose the significance of Roosevelt's new departure.

I was so taken up with the story, and Norton's way of telling it, that it was only when he had finished and waited for my next move that I bethought me of the objection: "I dare say, if I knew them all, I could quote some English Commissioner of Police as straight as he."

"It is not so very difficult for a gentleman in such a position to run straight in England."

"That is true; but still, even the Commissioner

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of New York Police is hardly abreast of a Cabinet Minister."

"But this one is going to go up farther."

I could not help reflecting how superior a test of a man's ability the administration of the police was. In England we have nothing to go upon but stump-oratory. It was natural to add: "It is a pity we *cannot* hope to see him President!"

"Hope if you like!"

"I don't believe in desperate hopes, and like to keep within probabilities."

"I tell you that, if Roosevelt lives, he'll be President of the United States. He is now where he has to be seen. He is a strong and able man, who is not to be bought. That is sure to be discovered. Then the machine politicians will have no choice."

"His candidature will come like an avalanche, and the calculators accept him like bad weather. Eh?"

"That's what will happen."

When I saw he was in earnest, "They'll kill him first," said I.

"*They won't try that!*"

"You leave that sort of thing to Europe, eh? But the knaves you told me of must be frantic at the thought of such a man becoming President."

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"No doubt they are; but in this country, when the popular will is really made plain, it is accepted as a thing to be endured—accepted, as you said, like the weather."

We spoke of the European explosions of 1848, which were started by a good country priest becoming Pope, and deciding to govern by the New Testament and dispense with chicane. That upset Europe. And a politician of the Cromwell and Carlyle style of honesty becoming President of the United States of America would assuredly either fail and die or begin a revolution—a peaceful revolution, perhaps, but a fundamental one, with results incalculable.

Norton went along with me in all that, dotting the i's and stroking the t's, as boys say; adding to what I said, never subtracting from it.

The conclusion was the greatest surprise of all.

"Do you think it possible he may go straight ahead, even if he is made President?"

"Quite certain he will."

"Then it will be one of the most important events in the history of America if Roosevelt becomes President!"

"It will; and that is what is going to happen."

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13. BURMA

ANOTHER prophecy must wait a long time yet for its fulfilment—or the reverse. I had answered many questions about Burma and quoted songs of mine. Readers who know the hymn, "There is a happy land," may try these words to it, and incidentally enter into the spirit of the Irish of the East, as the Burmans have been called.

"There is a happy land,
Far, far away;
Where gilt pagodas stand,
Shining by day!
Bright skies and little smoke,
Coloured clothes and no poor folk,
E'en ploughing is a joke—
Something like play!

Gay are the people there,
When free from wars,
Brown blends with black and fair,
Nothing there jars.
Schoolmasters never cuff;
Little boys have play enough;
E'en little babies puff
Great big cigars!"

"Their merry temper is likely to be sadly changed after sixty or seventy years more of the blessings of bureaucracy."

"Delighted to live so long to see," was the

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obvious reply; but as I shall not be in Burma in 1955 or 1965 this prophecy may stand on record here to be criticized or verified by posterity.

14. CARLYLE ON MILITARY SERVICE

OUR talk about how easily the Burmans were conquered because of their lack of preparation led on to the miraculous condition of unarmed England amid a hostile Europe; and so we passed back to Carlyle's opinions. So far as my memory serves, neither Norton nor myself expressed any opinions of our own in this connexion. On visits to Europe he had associated a great deal with Carlyle. "Our intercourse has been very human," was the old man's parting phrase to him. Unfortunately he had made no notes at the time, and described their talk in general terms, telling me little that was of direct use, but a great deal that helped me to discriminate among doubtful material supplied by others. More than any other man, except David Masson and Carlyle's relatives, he enabled me to appreciate the beautiful simplicity of Carlyle's character.

The thoughts of "the Seer of Chelsea" upon the duty of military preparation have been so clearly expressed in his writings that, to us who

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knew his books, his verbal utterances were merely redundant corroboration ; but as that very circumstance eliminates the danger of our being misled by "slippery memory," it may be right to repeat in common words what Carlyle had to say.

He thought that no mother's son born in England had a right to live in it unless he was prepared to die for it, and able to fight. Mere willingness to die does not go far. A woman can do that. A man must be able to fight and keep the country safe, so that to all eternity old England might hold to the rest of the world the same lofty tone that John Milton held, articulating the meaning of Oliver Cromwell and his Ironsides to the startled kings and emperors, who were watching, like dogs upon the leash, for a chance to interfere. "The kings of England shall be judged by the laws of England. . . . Our king made us not, we made him. . . . The people is not for the king, but the king is for the people. . . . *What the devil is it to you what the English do among themselves?*"

If Carlyle could have been brought to approve of any extended suffrage, it would have been a suffrage restricted to the men who were, or long had been, fit to fight, as the only men that should be politically allowed to count. Far from approv-

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ing of the plan of hiding behind fleets or fortresses, he thought the function of the English fleet very different from what we now suppose. (*See* his *Frederick the Great*, books xvi. c. 14, and xx. c. 13.) Even Drake did not begin by fighting. He was a plain merchant sailor, who was not allowed by the Spaniards to labour in his vocation; and, in Carlyle's opinion, the victory of the English at sea in the eighteenth century was not, as it has been supposed, the victory of organized pirates or monopolists, but rather of honest sea-going men who had been driven, in self-defence, to benefit humanity as well as themselves by clearing the seas of pirates and monopolists. In modern phrase, he might be said to esteem our navy the police of the ocean, whose function was to strengthen the hands of well-doing men in all countries.

Unfortunately our short-sighted politicians could not see that the interests of Britain and humanity coincided; and so they have used the navy as a screen for cowards, as if Englishmen were unable to fight, while some of them did even worse, and used it for conquests or wholesale burglaries, with the combined result that they have excited universal fear and greed. If our politicians had been able to rise to the level

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of our greatest historian, the present suicidal scramble for supremacy at sea would have been averted.

Perhaps there still is time. The peculiar strength of the British Empire is that it is not based on conquest or domination anywhere. We never "conquered" India, and do not monopolize it, as France does Tonquin or Algeria. We took temporary charge of India, as it lay derelict. Among the Emperors and decorated Dick Turpins of the world's history, John Bull appears like Brutus among Cæsar's murderers.

> "He only, in a general honest thought
> And common good to all, made one of them."

Thomas Carlyle did not undervalue our fleet. On the contrary, he thought that the fisheries should be cherished as a nursery of it, so that any clever fisher boy might hope to command a battleship some day. But as the narrow seas can now be easily crossed at any season, we should be prepared for a hostile army to be slipped through our fleet, if mist and weather favoured; and then, as Frederick the Great said, when he watched from the fields of Silesia the Austrian army coming over the mountains, and Valori wanted to know why he did not dispute the passes—"If you want to get the mouse, don't shut the trap, leave the

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trap open." Let them come if they want to come, and care to risk the passage; *let* them come, and *welcome!* And let them get such a reception that it will be long before anyone will want to follow their example. . . .

15. MR FROUDE

"MY conscience is quite clear about Froude," said Norton to me one day. "I warned Carlyle against him, saying he would play him a trick if he could. I said he was not a man to be trusted, and nothing should be left to his discretion."

Reflecting on various things known to us both, I suggested that perhaps Carlyle had heeded his warning, and been more cautious than he might otherwise have been. But Norton did not think so. "I don't think that what I said made any difference," Carlyle answered me—"I saw you did not like Froude. If you knew him better I think you would. I said I was sure I wouldn't."

"Froude did a great deal of harm to Ruskin, too," said Norton, explaining that he meant that Froude pretended to think Ruskin always right against the world. "He flattered him abominably."

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"Was that how he got into Carlyle's graces?"

"No. Carlyle could not be humbugged like that. There was rather more sincerity in Froude's attitude of discipleship to him. Froude overdid it, indeed, acted it more than he felt. . . ."

16. "AY, MADAM, IT IS COMMON."

HAMLET.

THE last prophecy of Mr Norton's which I will mention was such as I have often heard from old men of earnest temper in Scotland.

"Give us a date for your *Life of Carlyle*," said he. I excused myself, but he pressed the point. Then I said 1920.

"Then it can have no interest for me," said he, promptly. "Why in the world wait so long?"

I explained how I had to drudge in Burma from Monday morning to Saturday night, with barely Sundays free, in an exhausting climate. I could collect materials and work at them on furlough, but on active service I could barely do a little reading.

He still pressed for an accelerated pace; and in the end I admitted that I felt too young to realize the feelings of Carlyle late in life. I could not yet understand him well enough to select among

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the multitudinous materials the most significant facts. As I turned the corner of life's hill I felt that things would be cleared up. I enjoyed the job, and would not make a task of it, but write as the Quakers spoke, just as the spirit moved me. I would keep it, as Goethe kept *Wilhelm Meister*, till I had made it as good as I could. Nothing would please me better than to be forestalled. I had no wish to seek a hearing by the device of "new materials," and had the composed feeling that if the *Life of Carlyle* were not adequately written by me it would be done by somebody else. I said as little as I could on such topics, but may here note now (1909) that I have often advised people who showed me new material to print it. Within a few weeks after leaving Boston in 1895, I was staying with Carlyle's youngest sister in Canada (Mrs Hanning), and read all Carlyle's letters in her possession, and with her approval and her daughter's I burned several, not for Carlyle's sake, but for the sake of other people. Then, having put her papers into a fit state for printing, I told her she need not have any anxiety now, but let any of her daughters give some friendly Canadian scholar the pleasure of editing them—which in due course was done. See *Letters of T. Carlyle to his Youngest Sister.*

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In spite of all I said, Norton pressed me to hasten, saying life was short, and a good workman knows when to have done, and so on. I said I could not serve out my covenant with the Secretary of State till 1911, and would then need a year to recruit.

Here be it noted that his urgency had such an effect on me that within two months after leaving Boston, being still on furlough, I began and finished before I returned to duty the most tiresome and repulsive part of my task, the argument with "truthful James." It was published in 1898 by W. Heinemann as *Mr Froude and Carlyle*, and Mr Norton wrote and told me it pleased him. But in 1895 I did not promise any such performance, not feeling sure I could do it. The only concession I made was to say at last—"If all goes well, the *Life* may be done in 1915. That is the earliest date possible."

He remained silent a while, and then said,—

"Even that is too late so far as I am concerned. Whatever happens in 1915 cannot matter to me."

This was early in our talks; and the thought thus indicated in no way diminished his goodwill and helpfulness to me, a stranger; but he spoke throughout in the noble spirit of an old man planting seeds whereof he never expects to see the growth.

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CHAPTER XX

CHOSEN PEOPLES

1. PRELIMINARY

[*N.B.*—Written 1900. First printed in the *Westminster Review*, February 1905.]

IT was the late Sir Charles Gavan Duffy who caused me to write this article. I was on my way to visit him in 1897 when I heard the talk described in it. Happening to hear the matter mentioned, Sir Charles one afternoon insisted on hearing it all from beginning to end. He enjoyed it so much that in 1900, when again we were together, he *would* have it again. I had half forgotten it, but gradually succeeded once more in telling it all in order as it had been. Then he made me promise to write it down. So a few weeks later, during a voyage from Marseilles to Rangoon, I wrote what follows.

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2. GREEKS AND ROMANS, ARABS AND JEWS

IN an excellent book called *French and English* the late Mr P. G. Hamerton has explained how the French are more ready than ourselves to enter into conversation with a stranger at a *table d'hôte*, in a railway carriage, or wherever else it may happen that people unknown to each other are flung together. For the how and the why of this the reader must be referred to Mr Hamerton's work. As a good illustration of it, I propose to jot down the best accidental colloquy I ever heard on the Continent. It has been forcibly recalled to mind by our gibes at the Boers.

"What stupid bumpkins they are!" exclaimed our journalists, "they even think, they do indeed, that they are the Chosen People!"

It was in April 1897 that an express train from Paris to the Riviera stopped at Marseilles; and into a second-class carriage all but full a stranger entered, with the tawny beard and the spectacles associated in Parisian minds with Prussian officers. The other passengers were apparently Parisians, on their way to Monaco, where the magnanimous sovereign of that small and virtuous principality was then giving a series

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of entertainments (at less than cost price, very cheap indeed) to the literary world. There were Messrs. X and Y, two professors, it appeared, Madame X, Messrs. Z and W, journalists or artists, and Mlle. Q, an elderly lady with a pince-nez, who had the air of being something very superior indeed—one could not guess what. Finally, there was an unassuming, quiet person, who seemed to suffer from some defect in his vocal organs, for he said nothing. He was useful in a way; for when two were speaking at once, any third who wished to begin could address him without fear of interruption.

There is a profound saying, "narrative is linear, and action is cubic"; but action is not the only thing that narrative can never perfectly represent. Mere conversation is often too confused for record, and so I find it in this instance. One pair of ears could not hear it all, and of what was heard the memory, an unconscious artist, retains little more than the tit-bits. Nay, worse than that, it is apt to mix other tit-bits with these. Such conversations hover dimly in the mind after three years. At this distance of time[1] I cannot even be certain that what is attributed to one speaker was not said by another. The utmost I can give

[1] 1900.

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assurance of, on my word of honour, is this, that everything here written down as conversation was actually said in the course of conversation, some time or other, by somebody or other. Under the circumstances, no reader can reasonably expect more.

The Greek war was going on then, and X made several efforts to get a recent paper before the train started. "Allow me," said Z, and he tried next. X subsided into his seat, mopping his brow, and Z soon did so too, equally unsuccessful. "Here's the latest," said the newcomer, on learning what was wanted. W took the paper and read aloud the latest telegrams for the information of all, but the buzz of commentary made them more than half inaudible. They were read twice. Even then Madame X declared she had not heard, and held out her hand for the paper. Then she was silent, reading.

All who had spoken had expressed lively sympathy with the Greeks. The new-comer said nothing till Mlle. Q suggested he was probably on his way to join the Turks.

"No," said he. "Why do you think so?"

Mlle. Q murmured something about "Prussian officers." He assured her he was no Prussian and did not know German, but was a Scot and as such a friend of the French. "Have you never

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heard how the Scots served in the French Army?" he asked.

Mlle. Q smiled. But, as she merely said she knew the Scots were old friends of the French, X proceeded to give a charming and complimentary summary of the services of the Scots in the Middle Ages. When he finished, the new-comer, let us call him B, added some anecdotes. X corroborated them, and then turning to him said, "And as a student of history, for such you must be, I'm sure you share our feelings of sympathy for that noble race that led the van of civilization in Europe."

"The Greeks have changed much since they did that," was the answer.

"Yes," said X, "but still they have all the noble pride of a chosen race. They feel as the ancient Greeks felt, and who knows but they may be fated, while all the rest of Europe holds back, to give the *coup de grâce* to the moribund Turkish Empire?"

"Not they," said B. "They'll be beaten. They would never have been independent without the help of Europe."

The others seemed surprised, but X said, "Yes, that is true."

B continued: "I'm sorry for them. I hope

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Europe may again intervene in time. If it doesn't, they'll be squashed again."

"How?"

"Well, by superior numbers, heavier metal, better discipline, better leading, better preparation in short."

"Oh, yes, perhaps," said X. There was a sad silence for a moment and a kind of sigh that was felt. These Parisians were all old enough to remember 1871.

"I always feared for the Greeks," said Madame X, who had not been listening. She went on to quote from the newspaper some statistics about the opposing armies.

"Surely France will save Greece," said W. "I think it must and shall. France and Russia can do it against the world."

"There's no power would object but Turkey, I fancy," said B. "I know the English also sympathize a good deal with the Greeks."

"The Germans have taught the Turks to fight," said X, "but even they would be ashamed to see a chosen race enslaved and all Europe would be ashamed to allow it. It is impossible."

"For that matter," said B, "I don't think the Greeks are peculiar in thinking themselves a chosen race. Nearly every nation thinks so of

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itself. I cannot recollect one that doesn't, or didn't. Even the Peruvians and Mexicans, who had not learned to write, had the same conceit, and you know that, in whatever else the Red Indian was deficient, it was not in noble pride of race. He was as dignified and as full of his own importance as an ancient Roman."

"Now you mention Romans I begin to agree with you," said X. "When I think of it, the Romans had nothing but contempt for the Greeks, and believed themselves the Chosen People, fated to rule the world. They believed that as firmly as ever the Jews did."

"And with better cause than the Jews," said Z. He relieved his feelings by a bitter and witty tirade against that particular variety of chosen people.

"After all," said B, "the Jewish belief was common to all the Semitic tribes. The Arabs were of the same opinion, except that they thought the Chosen People were Arabs, and the Hebrews insignificant heretics. To them, Cairo to-day is what Paris is to you—the centre of civilization."

"And what, in their eyes, are the English there?" asked Mlle. Q.

"What the French were," said B, "mere

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passing visitors." The lady seemed incredulous. "The Egyptians are not so absurd as you perhaps suppose," he added. "The Greeks and the Romans conquered Egypt by turns, and held it for centuries. They passed away, leaving no more trace behind them than the desert wind. So shall the English."

"In a few centuries, no doubt," said X, amidst general hilarity. Z alone was grave. He wore a tragic air till there was silence, and then he said:

"The English in Egypt are indeed what Moltke thought them, bailiffs collecting debts. The English and the Egyptian soldiers slew each other in order that the Jews might be paid."

"The Egyptian bonds were not all held by Jews," said Mlle. Q, snappishly. "If the English function is what you say, it is a most honourable one."

"Whatever the English function in Egypt," said X, "the population is Arabic, and it is indeed true that the Arabs seem to themselves the Chosen People. They have felt so since the time of Mohammed."

"To be sure they have," said Z, "and for them also there is the same justification that the Romans had. Consider their conquests, how

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they overran Asia, Africa and Europe," and he gave many details.

"Not all Europe," said X when Z was out of breath. "They were stopped in France, you know; but they certainly had excellent justification for believing in themselves. I also agree with our friend that it is a Semitic characteristic. Consider the Phœnicians, and after them the Carthaginians," whereupon he gave us a brief outline of the Punic wars, ending with the reflections of Scipio as he looked on the ruins of Carthage. "Assyria had fallen, and Persia and Macedon. Carthage was burning. Rome's day might come next."

"How just his thoughts were," said Mlle. Q, "and how reasonable his fears for Rome." Then, addressing herself to B, "You must admit," said she, "that the Italians have degenerated more since then than the Greeks."

"But still they retain their pride," said he.

"Yes," said X. "The French made them a nation, and now they are holding up their heads again."

"Their art justifies the feeling," said W, and he discoursed on Italian art till all agreed that the Italians not only did still believe themselves

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a Chosen People, but might be excused for doing so.

"I prefer French art, to-day," said B. "Of course," said Madame X and W. Mlle. Q scrutinized him as if doubtful of his sincerity; but he satisfied her and delighted everybody by quoting the lines of Béranger:

"Nature n'est rien;
Mais on recommande
Goût italien
Et grâce allemande."

3. GERMANS AND ENGLISH, DUTCHMEN AND SPANIARDS, AND AMERICANS ASSORTED

"I DOUBT," said Y, "whether it is the Semitic blood that makes a race think itself a Chosen People. The Semitic races think so, but they are not alone in that. Both the Greeks and the Italians think that of themselves, and no one could call them Semitic, and the Germans, who are good for nothing but fighting like machines, are as conceited as ever the Jews were. They think themselves the masters of Europe, and are as insolent in consequence as the English"—then suddenly recollecting himself he turned to B—"if you will forgive my

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saying so. But you must be aware of how the Englishman gives himself airs, and in talking divides mankind into Englishmen and foreigners."

"Just as the ancient Greeks did," said B. "No Englishman doubts that his is the Chosen People."

They all laughed.

"But the Scots know better?" queried Mlle. Q.

"Of course," said B. "A Scotsman is too well aware of the superiority of the Scots to have any illusions about the English."

"The Irish are more modest, aren't they?" asked W.

"Oh, dear, no!" interposed X. "I have just learned that the Irish believe they taught Christianity to Europe, and would have given us all a much superior civilization if the English had not conquered their country, and the Pope taken charge of their church. There may be something in it, too. They are a pure Celtic race."

"The English, Scots and Irish are all rapidly blending," said B, after a pause, "and while each may think his own clan the best, as Bretons, Normans and Provençals do in France, all alike sing 'Rule Britannia' with as much sincerity as ever the Jews sang any psalm."

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"No doubt of that," said X, "and yet it is just their ignorance." Then, addressing himself specially to Mlle. Q, he discoursed on the antiquated methods of education among the benighted islanders, and how the clergy—"a much more ignorant and conceited class of men than even our priests"—kept the English still, as in the Middle Ages, manufacturing Latin verses. They were the Chinese of Europe, in short. Then turning to B, he discoursed on the predominancy of Paris, giving to the French nation a kind of organic unity, and thereby quite a unique superiority. Paris played the tune to which the nation danced. "A man is looked up to here in the provinces for being pure Parisian, whereas you know how all the English outside London jeer at 'Cockleys.'"

"Cockneys," B corrected. The etymology of the term was discussed. The best guess was that it might be connected with "Cock-a-doodle-doo."

Then X gave a French version of English history, telling how England had been conquered by the French and ruled for centuries by French kings, and how it fell off when detached from the Continent, till Cromwell lifted it up again, welded Ireland and Scotland into it, and showed his

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genius by recognizing the ascendancy of France. He seemed to confuse Cromwell and Charles II., but was not corrected.

"I think," he said, returning to the original topic, "this conceit of being a Chosen People is a Teutonic as well as a Semitic characteristic. Look at the insignificant Swedes, too, as well as the English and the Germans, to say nothing of the Dutch."

"Surely the Dutch cannot think much of themselves," said W. But B mentioned the Dutch methods of administration in the East Indies, and Y said, "A Dutchman walks along the street in Batavia with all the aggressive dignity of a dull, domineering schoolmaster. Natives and other inferior persons must keep off the pavement, like the gallant sandwichmen in London." He seemed to suppose the sandwichmen were somehow connected with the army.

He next described, by way of contrast, the French treatment of the Tonquinese, to the great disadvantage of the Dutch. "The French have a genius for assimilating other races," he concluded. X summarized Dutch history. All seemed to agree that the best thing for both Dutch and Belgians would be to cashier their monarchs, abjure their patois, and unite with the

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French, dropping once for all their foolish Teutonic conceit.

"But is it only Teutonic?" asked B. "What say you to the Spaniards?"

"Oh, the true destiny of Spain also," said X, "is to join France. It is centuries since King Louis said, 'The Pyrenees are no more.'"

"But the Spaniards did not think so."

"No. What can you expect of a people who, because once by the accident of history they had a king who ruled much of the rest of Europe, and were led by an Italian Columbus to the discovery of America, fancy they are still a leading power now when they hold nothing outside their own poor country but a few tropical islands, and have difficulty in holding even these? They think themselves a Chosen People, but are as mad as Don Quixote in doing so. It may be their Semitic blood. There's a good deal of the Arab in the Spaniard."

"There's not much of it among the Spanish-speaking races in South America," said B, "and yet they are no more modest."

"Oh, they're modest compared to the Yankees," cried W. "The Spanish-speaking races have a balance of mind derived from their Latin blood and training. They may think themselves a

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Chosen People with some reason, and are not offensive. But the Yankee—Bah."

"Repeat what you were telling us some time ago," said Madame X.

"It's like renewing sorrow," said he, "but our friend deserves to hear it. It was a Yankee. He told me that his great-great-great-grandfather had been a runaway Huguenot, and that he was a kind of *improved* Frenchman. He said this with the air of a man who wished to make himself agreeable. He was rich and bought pictures from me and my friends, so I had to listen to him."

The others smiled sympathetically, and encouraged him to tell more of the Yankee's talk.

"He began about our overwhelming National Debt," said W, "and our corrupt politicians. I thought about the Hall of Tammany, but I said nothing. He went on to twaddle about our overgrown army and navy, and how we add to them, increasing our debt every year. He thought it a pity, now we have the wisdom to remain Republicans, that we are not also wise enough to see our true interest is—can you believe it?—to beg the United States to have pity on us, and vouchsafe us their kind protection. He was good enough to assure me we might

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retain our own language 'as long as you want to,' said he. These were his words. He seemed to think we might in time *want* to give it up, but he was too considerate to say so.

"We might dispense with any field army, retaining just enough for police work to shoot down anarchists, and perhaps to garrison a few fortresses, but, of course, not all our fortresses. We have too many, and should dismantle most of them and use the buildings for factories or something useful. We were to give up all foreign policy and leave that to their President in Washington. He would protect us against Germany. After our army was reduced and the Yankees were satisfied of our sincerity, we might be allowed a few votes in the election of their President, and, perhaps, be allowed to elect a Senator or two and a Congressman. If Germany were troublesome, the United States would—what say you to this?—forbid any invasion. They would be gracious enough to us to tell the German Emperor to behave himself."

When we finished laughing at this, Y said, "Go on. What if the German Emperor dared to disobey?"

"That seemed scarcely to occur to him as possible," said W.

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"But the United States have a very small army and navy," objected Y.

"Oh, as for that," said he, "he remarked we could not do better with our navy than sell it to the Yankees, all but a few old ships for harbour work. The Yankees could do the fighting at sea much better than we could. He did not think Germany could do much against the United States. He said the United States and Russia were to be the two great World Powers. I asked how there could be *two* World Powers? He thought the United States would allow the Russians to take permanent charge of uncivilized races. They would be very cheap policemen for Central Asia."

After a pause W continued: "Talk of conceit! The Jews are modest compared to the Yankees."

"There are many Jews among them," said Z.

"Bah!" said W, "what are the Yankees? Originally a few Frenchmen and Englishmen, now watered down by millions of Polish, German and Russian Jews, and the lowest and vilest of the Italian and some secondary races, the very dregs of Europe. They pay two prices for everything they buy from us, these Yankees, but they get things cheap enough for all that."

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4. THE CHOSEN PEOPLES OF INDIA

AT one interval, when the train had stopped at some station, B went out. He had been complaining of thirst. Mlle. Q watched him and remarked, "He walks like an officer." He bought a bottle of light wine, poured it into a tumbler, and finished it at a draught. "He has a German thirst," said Mlle. Q.

When B came back the others laughingly told him this. He smiled and said, "Ah, if you only knew where I have to earn my living you would understand. I live in India, and all the Europeans there suffer great thirst. Perhaps I should say *enjoy* it. They are quenching it continually. Theirs is the happiness that seemed heavenly to the man that, in visiting the Zoo, envied the giraffe his long neck. When Anglo-Indians retire, it is said they miss the thirst of the Tropics more than anything else there."

"I suppose there is no doubt which is the Chosen People there," remarked Y.

"Why, no," said B, "nobody has any misgivings."

"All believe in the English, of course?" asked Y.

"All the English do," said B. "The other

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races believe in themselves. They recognize the power of the English, and tolerate them, just as even the Yankee was willing to tolerate another World Power in the Russians—that is to say, as policemen."

"But they must look up to the English," remarked X. "Take the Bengalis, for instance. Surely they cannot be so stupid as to think themselves chosen for anything but to be a subject race. The very negroes could conquer them." Then he quoted a song that might be translated:

> "'Tween soldiers and soldiers there's little to choose,
> But one man's a match for a thousand Babus."

"If you go to Bengal, don't talk like that," said B. "The people of Bengal, like most others, are of mixed origins. One of the best clerks I ever had was a steady old Babu. There are many well-educated men among them, and some are really able. Speaking generally, however, they are as conceited as the English, if possible."

"I doubt the possibility," said X. "But what grounds of conceit can the Bengalis have?"

"They are like other people," said B. "They have a few real reasons and many more that are unreal. If an educated Bengali had begun answering that question when you left Paris, he

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might have been still talking at Marseilles. Nothing but physical fatigue would have arrested his flow of language. They are much addicted to eloquence."

"They must be a particularly clever race," said Madame X.

"That does not seem to me to follow," said B. "Intellect means what a poet calls the 'mind's eye,' the capacity to recognize facts or to see what's what. Words rightly used are indispensable for matters not lying under our noses, but what people usually call eloquence is a different thing. The clever mathematician is not he who can most quickly or most neatly cover a sheet of paper with figures or letters. A child could do that. The mathematician writes nothing without a meaning, and you judge of his skill, if you know his science, by the meaning only. So it is with words, spoken or written. I know a Bengali who in a week or so could write as much as all the works of Tacitus. Nevertheless, compared to Tacitus, he is what a little child scrawling x's and y's is to D'Alembert."

"The child scrawling x's and y's may be a most promising child," persisted Madame, and this part of the argument ended in merriment.

"Tell us more about the eloquent Bengalis,"

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said she then to B. "The other Indians, at least, are likely to appreciate eloquence, although you don't."

"The Bengalis," said B, "are not more eloquent than other Indian races—at least I never heard it said they were. Nearly all Indians are born orators, each in his own tongue. I have heard illiterate peasants harangue in a style worthy of Lamartine or Thiers, Gladstone or Beaconsfield."

"Or Dan O'Connell?" asked Z. "He, you know, talked down a virago, a blatant old Irish woman selling fish."

"He'd be nowhere," said B. "I have seen and heard an old native woman similarly engaged who could talk down a dozen Dans."

"Was she a Bengali?" asked Madame.

"No, I was thinking of an old Burmese. I have heard Madrassis just as glib. I have no doubt there are many Bengalis the same. In fact I think one might undertake to provide half a dozen orators from any bazaar in India, able to hold their own against the whole Chamber of Deputies, to say nothing of the House of Commons."

"Do the Bengalis differ at all from the rest?" asked X.

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"They have perhaps more English-speaking men among them."

"And do the other races accept them as leaders?"

"Not at all," said B. "Each race believes in itself. There are, of course, wild half-savage folks, whose thoughts are hidden from us, like the thoughts of the dumb cattle. I do not speak of them. But take the other races. They dissemble their thoughts and feelings as much as they can, but one thing is plain, and it is that each believes in itself as a kind of Chosen People. I could give several instances from nearly every province in India."

Invited to mention some, he continued: "The Parsees are a fugitive clan, and few; yet they feel that India was specially created for their accommodation. The Rajputs know it was theirs before any Mohammedans appeared, and look upon the Mohammedans as intruders. Many other Hindu races, Tamils, for example, in Southern India, have precisely the same feelings. The Mohammedans believe God specially created them to destroy the idolatry of India and take possession. They differ fiercely as to whether Shiahs or Sunnis are the chosen folk. They have almost as many sects as Protestant Christians. But each sect believes in itself.

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"Outside India are the Afghans, also Mohammedans. Because Upper India was once ruled from Afghanistan they consider it the intention of Providence to give it all to them, as soon as they are able to agree among themselves and negotiate a surrender with the English. But their nearest neighbours in India are the brave Hindu Sikhs, who have no misgivings about their own ability to deal with the Afghans. Sikhs and Afghans hate each other, as might be expected of neighbours.

"As for the Brahmins, they look down on all these disputes from a great height. They consider such pretensions the vain refuges of peoples who must feel their own inferiority but are too ill-bred to admit it.

"The Burmans too have a similar feeling, in spite of the fact that they are not in any respect above the average of India. You know how contemptuously the Burman King treated all European Ambassadors, and finally made war on India."

"No," said Mlle. Q.

"Yes," said X, "that is quite right. They even invaded India successfully, but were circumvented by the English command of the sea. An English army appeared at Rangoon where it was

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least expected. That was more than fifty years ago."

"Long after then," said Y, "and until the war of 1885, I have been told the heralds at the palace in Mandalay made every morning a public proclamation saying, after the preliminary music and other noises subsided, that all other potentates of the world, Czars, Emperors, Kings, Princes and Presidents, must wait, and must *not* begin their breakfasts until after the Serene Majesty of Burma, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, had finished his. This was the Burmese royal 'Grace before Meat.' After the King had breakfasted another proclamation was made in the same way, the heralds kindly informing the listening and waiting world that His Serene Majesty of Burma, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, had finished, so that the other potentates of the world, Czars, Emperors, Kings, Princes and Presidents, might now take breakfast." [1]

"Were Queens not mentioned?" asked Madame X.

"No. I suppose it was taken for granted they would feel their own insignificance and not need telling."

[1] This story was well known in Rangoon, and Y might have been one of the many Frenchmen who resorted to Mandalay till 1885.

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"You know," said B, "how the Orientals keep the better half of creation in the background."

"What is the attitude of the Brahmins to the English?" asked X.

"Their feelings," answered B, "resemble what an English poet fancifully attributed to the Orientals conquered by Rome.

"'The brooding East with awe beheld
Her impious younger world.
The Roman tempest swell'd and swell'd,
And on her head was hurl'd.

The East bow'd low before the blast
In patient, deep disdain;
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again.'"

X translated this and the conversation continued as before.

"I had a Brahmin servant once," said B. "His demeanour was that of a condescending prince who chose to live a little while incognito. He left me at the end of the first month in a curious way. The war was going on and servants were scarce. When receiving his wages, he said that I must double the amount, or he'd leave me at once, and so would all the other servants. He was sent away. The others received their ordinary wages without grumbling, and said they had promised the Brahmin to strike

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for double wages if he would begin. They did this, they explained, to get rid of him."

"But don't the others all look up to the Brahmins?" asked X.

"In certain parts of India many others do, but many don't. Then there are Brahmins and Brahmins. Large classes of them are tabooed by other Brahmins. Even among those who look up to them it is quite common for a man, especially of the lowest classes, to turn Mohammedan, or sometimes Christian. Then he looks down on the Brahmin as an idolater."

"Their colours are various, I suppose?"

"Yes. In Sanskrit caste meant colour. Sikhs are at times as fair as the Italians. The Tamils are as black as negroes. There are all shades."

"I don't wonder at even the blackest believing in themselves," said W, "for even negroes do that. Every tribe has its God. And think of Liberia, the negro republic, where full dress, I suppose, is a silk hat only. Some years ago, when war seemed imminent in Europe, Liberia sent a reassuring note to all the Powers to say that it would remain neutral. Happily Europe knew that Liberia's one man-of-war was immovable, because the only European engineer on it had struck work, as his pay was in arrears."

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5. MONGOLIANS AND SLAVONIANS AND THE FRENCH

"AREN'T the Burmese Mongolians?" asked X.

"Yes," said B, "brown Mongolians."

"Well," said X, with a look of mingled surprise and candour, "that makes me agree that this failing is also characteristic of Mongolian as well as of Semitic and Teutonic and dark races. We know how the Chinese regard all foreign devils, and not only consider themselves a World Power, but also think China the only important part of the world. I don't know about the Japanese."

"They are equally self-satisfied," said Y. "I have read a good deal about both, and find it difficult to realize much that I am compelled to believe. The conceit of the yellow race is colossal."

"Haven't they a respectful terror of the white races?" asked X.

"Terror—yes, at times," said Y, "respect, never. A savant just returned told me that he was almost sorry he had learned Chinese. He would have left the country with more pleasant recollections if he had not known the language. The Chinese

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were polite. But when he overheard them speaking of him among themselves, he was amazed to find that even servants and porters not only did not respect him, but actually looked down on him. They spoke of him as he might have spoken of a precocious ape, saying, 'the creature is beginning to talk like a man.'

"When alarmed, the Chinese do seem to look on us with loathing, such as we might have for apes, if, besides being like ourselves, and ugly, they had fangs as poisonous as a cobra's, and attacked us in swarms. Think how the Chinese women and children were killed or killed themselves to escape the terrible fate of being at the mercy of the French and English savages marching on Pekin."

"But do not our inventions put them in awe? And our scientific weapons?"

"They are only beginning to notice these things, and are not likely to respect us for them, any more than we respect a crocodile or a shark for strength of jaw. The Japanese have learned to use our inventions quickly enough, and are growing more conceited than ever in consequence. Among my acquaintances in Paris is a Japanese medical student, who is sure Japan is fated to take the first place in the world, as soon as it has

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digested China and driven back the Russians from the Pacific."

"They'll never do that," said Messrs. X, W and Z in chorus. "Never," echoed the ladies. For ten minutes one had to listen to harangues in praise of the noble Russian people. Unfortunately, there was always more than one going on at once. So a listener could gather nothing more definite than that Russia was fated to dominate Eastern Europe and Asia, and hand-in-hand with France give law to the world.

"Do they too believe themselves a Chosen People?" asked B, as soon as he could be heard.

"Assuredly," said X. He proceeded to give a brief outline of Russian history—how Russia had stood in the breach and saved Europe from the Tartar hordes, how it had grown and grown, learning civilization from France as it grew, and how, all misunderstandings with France now ended, the road was open for its magnificent forward march. The Panslavist enthusiasm at the time of the last Russo-Turkish war was described. "Never again," he concluded, "shall England and Germany concoct such a Berlin Treaty. Never again shall they stand in the path of the great Slav people."

"What of the Poles and the Hungarians?"

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asked B. "Don't they both believe in themselves as Chosen Races?"

"The Hungarians do," said X, "but as for the Poles, I never thought of their doing so." After a little discussion all agreed they did.

"The fact is," said X, "their political misfortunes have made them all silly on that topic."

It appeared to be the unanimous opinion that the Poles ought to reconcile themselves to Russia, and were fools for not having done it long ago.

The Hungarians also, it was thought, could not do better than prepare to join Russia. All other nationalities in Eastern Europe should do the same. The Turks were worthless. Their conceit was of a piece with their general stupidity. But others should know better. The extraordinary folly of Servians and Bulgarians believing in themselves was discussed as if they were the only peoples in the world who were so foolish. The destinies of Europe were so obviously entrusted to the great Russian people that it was criminal blindness in others not to recognize the fact. Such at least was the opinion of all but B.

"The destinies of Europe!" he exclaimed.

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"What then of the French, are not they a Chosen People?"

"In a sense, yes. In a sense, no," answered X. "The mission of the French is peculiar. It is the continuation of the noble work of the Greeks and Romans, whose true representatives are the French. They differ from all other nations in their superior intelligence. Other races have able individuals, especially those races that have long been on intimate terms with the French. But only among the French is that openness to light, which marks all strong intellects, so general as to be the common sign of any educated man. Our very artisans are sometimes equal or superior to German professors and our privates to German officers.

"The topic we have just been discussing is a striking illustration of my meaning. Every nation is deluded by self-conceit and thinks itself a Chosen People. The French alone are superior to any such nonsense. They know that superiority among races is due to nothing but clear intelligence, the very thing that makes mankind superior to other animals; therefore they regard nothing else.

"This is the secret of their marvellous assimilating power. The Alsatians are of German extrac-

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tion, but having learned much from us they became French in heart, and remain so to this day. Their present cruel fate is like that of a few civilized men thrown unarmed among inferior races, and compelled to assimilate themselves or be massacred. It is not that the French *think* themselves superior to other races, but that they *are* so, and the best proof of this is their freedom from any delusion about being a Chosen People."

He went on in this way till his breath failed him. Then said B, "You mean that they are among nations what Socrates was among the Greeks?"

"Precisely so," said X.

"I don't understand," said Madame.

"You must know," said her husband, "that Socrates, being pronounced by an oracle the wisest of the Greeks then living, said the explanation must be that he knew his own ignorance, and must suppose the others did not know theirs. It is a most apt illustration, and exactly expresses my meaning. I am much obliged to Monsieur."

"But Monsieur has not said that he agrees with you!" exclaimed Mlle. Q, peering up at that individual, who had now risen to quit the carriage, as the train had reached his destination.

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There was a general exclamation of surprise at Mlle. Q's remark.

"If one could judge a nation as one judges a poet," said B, "I mean by the best of his productions, then surely I could agree. The French, more perhaps than most nations, would prefer to be so judged."

"Yes," said W, "the French are the artists and poets of Europe."

B had no time to make his meaning clearer without needless offence. Amid salutations more cordial than usual he quitted the carriage, and was seen by its occupants no more.

The opinion he had advanced, that every nation thinks itself a chosen nation, had been a novelty to those who heard it and seems worth examination. It is by the advice of a veteran politician of cosmopolitan sympathies that I commend it to the candid consideration of impartial readers.

Assuredly, wherever one might go to seek a modest people who did not believe in themselves, it would not be to the fair land of France. Nor is the search likely to be successful elsewhere. There are many apparent exceptions, but every one on close study seems to verify the rule. National self-conceit is inherent in human nature,

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and seems not one whit more worthy of respect in the mobs of London, Paris, Berlin, or Madrid, than in the mobs of Pekin. There is a use for it no doubt; there is a varying amount of justice in the pride of every nation. Let others discuss these topics. Suffice it now to say that, useful or mischievous, right or wrong, the self-conceit of nations is everywhere, and this small world, poor little satellite of a mediocre star, is filled with *Chosen Peoples.*

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